The New REPUBLIC

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The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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THE New Republic is frankly an experiment. It is an attempt to find national audience for a journal of interpretation and opinion. Many people believe that such a journal is out of place in America; that if a periodical is to be popular, it must first of all be entertaining, or that if it is to be serious, it must be detached and select. Yet when the plan of The New Republic was being discussed it received spontaneous welcome from people in all parts of the country. They differed in theories and programmes; but they agreed that if The New Republic could bring sufficient enlightenment to the problems of the nation and sufficient sympathy to its complexities, it would serve all those who feel the challenge of our time. On the conviction that this is possible The New Republic is founded. Its success inevitably depends on public support, but if we are unable to achieve that success under the conditions essential to sound and disinterested thinking, we shall discontinue our experiment and make way for better men. Meanwhile, we set out with faith.

APART from the narrow margin whereby the Democrats retained control of the House of Representatives, the salient feature of the election is the apparently reactionary revulsion of popular opinion. Progressivism of all kinds has fared badly. The Progressive Party has been reduced to an insignificant remnant. The unprogressive members of the older parties are much more conspicuous on the face of the returns than are their progressive brethren. If we may judge by the fate of the proposed woman's suffrage amendments, progressive legislation has fared as ill as progressive candidates. The revulsion appears to be complete. No explanation can explain it away, but how is it to be explained?

In all probability it is more than anything else an exhibition of fatigue. Popular interest has been strained by a political agitation which has lasted too long and has made a too continuous demand upon discussed and never being settled, of supposed settlements which fail to produce the promised results, and of a ferment which yields such a small net return of good white bread. The voter whose interest is flagging reverts to his habits. He had been accustomed to vote as a member of one party when business was good, and sometimes to change over to the other party when business was bad. Business has been undeniably bad. His attention was not diverted from the business depression by the impulse of new and attractive political objects. On the contrary, progressive politics and economics had ceased to be either new or attractive. So the good voter cast his ballot as one or the other kind of a partisan, and the bi-partisan system has regained some of its old vitality. Neither should the substantial contribution which President Wilson has made to this result be overlooked. His scrupulous loyalty to his own party, and his determination to govern by means of a partisan machine and the use of partisan discipline, has resulted in the recrudescence of merely partisan Republicanism, and the increased political importance to the individual voter of a close connection with one of the two dominant parties.

THE severest blow which non-partisan progressivism received at the elections came from the apparently successful Senatorial candidacies of Sherman in Illinois, Gallinger in New Hampshire, and Penrose in Pennsylvania. These three gentlemen are all of them machine politicians with unsavory records, who represent everything most obnoxious to an American progressive. They were to a considerable extent opposed by the progressive elements in their own parties. Yet they were all nominated and elected by popular vote, and no adherent of popular government can question their title to their offices. The meaning of the lesson is unmistakable. Direct primaries and the direct popular election of Senators will not contribute much to the triumph of genuine political and social democracy

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tinue until the end of time to produce its crop of Penroses and Gallingers. Nor can the bi-partisan system be broken down by occasional outbreaks of non-partisanship. That was the delusion of the former Mugwumps. The average American voter will cease to be partisan only in so far as political and social agitation uncover for him positive objects of political action which retain his interest and command his allegiance. For the time being, his interest is relaxed and he is drifting back to his former habits, but he is as certain to recover his interest as the grass is to grow after rain. It is only the old and the sick and the feeble who do not recover from fatigue and yield once again to the temptation and stimulus of positive political and social effort.

A RECORD of more than fifty volumes having already been produced under the bored attention of a Referee, the government dissolution suit against the U. S. Steel Corporation has at last straggled into the United States Circuit Court. Argument was begun a fortnight ago. Judges and counsel; clerks and secretaries; and stenographers who have grown up, married and settled down on the job; plaintiff, defendant and newspaper readers, all know that the decision, whatever it is, will no sooner be announced than preparations will begin for carrying the case to the Supreme Court. There the same record, built upon still more vertiginously, will appear again; the same counsel will present the same arguments; the same clerks, the same secretaries, the same stenographers, their progeny increased, will transcribe the same testimony; and Bill the Lizard, writing with his finger on the slate, may be expected to go on writing the evidence quite in the manner of the famous case of the Queen's tarts.

IT is rumored that a certain number of American statesmen are acquainted with the fact that the war was certain to produce severe unemployment this winter. You might think this knowledge would have cast a slight shadow over the congratulation which the Democratic Congress bestowed upon itself, that it might have received at least a little comment from the candidates, and some concerted thought from the states. Yet instead of adequate provision, what we seem to be witnessing is the usual drift into the suffering of the winter, amidst the appointment of hasty commissions to investigate, and the threats and shouts of the I. W. W. Public officials will feel themselves abused for not being able to do what they don't know how to do; there will be a scurry to provide beds and food; and all the while the damning fact will remain that the problem could have been foreseen, that the first steps in its treatment are known. How then shall we explain to the men who are out of work why no adequate labor exchanges exist, why no form of insurance has ever been publicly discussed? What answer shall we make to their own simple diagnosis, which says that mayors and governors and legislatures are afraid to attack the private employment agencies or that the great mass of people are too preoccupied to care? They will point out that the cotton planters of the South were interesting to the whole nation; they will wonder why they, sitting dejectedly on park benches, are so little thought about. When their fighting blood stirs, and they say that they will be heard and felt, that they propose to sting us into recognition, shall we simply ask them to be quiet, to slink into corners, and to pardon us if we have failed to provide for what we could so easily have foreseen?

IT is fervently to be hoped that Switzerland will give credence to Minister Ritter's denial of attacks upon that country by the American press because it did not officially protest against the violation of Belgian territory. Whatever indiscretions may have been committed by irresponsible journals, we can assure Switzerland that there has been no organized attempt to inflame the minds of our people against that tall but thin republic. While as a nation we do not admit that Switzerland is in advance of the United States in any respect except alphabetically, we have only friendly feelings toward her, if any. We do not desire a war with Switzerland, especially at this time, when communications are so shattered that war could not be carried on with any degree of comfort. Lest this be thought national cowardice, let us hasten to add that if Switzerland invades our shores she will find us ready to a man to defend our hearthstones.

NEXT Thursday in the Southern city of Nashville the women suffragists of America meet in national convention. In view of recent political events, this may well prove to be the most momentous deliberation in the history of their cause. Up to the present the mission of the national body has been primarily educational. It is now inevitably political as well, and in this forthcoming convention it is called on to affirm its nation-wide political policy. The National Association must face the issue precipitated by the adventurous group which, adapting English tactics, attacks the Democratic party as a whole. This group frankly regards the Democratic party as "the government of the day," and seeks

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good or not, it is opposed to the strong non-partisan tradition of the National Association, and it is a question on which the parent body should clear its own mind. Then, again, the rival constitutional amendments need to be discussed on their merits. One, as is well known, is the straight amendment decreeing national suffrage. The other, devised last year, provides for submitting the question to the voters of each state by initiative petition. The supporters of the second amendment have national suffrage in view, but they believe the longest way round is the shortest way home. It is healthy that there should be rivalry on this question. On the question of party tactics, however, rivalry is a politer name for dissension. And if the suffrage agitation is to be anything more than political gymnastics, the less dissension and the more candid understanding, the better.

THOUGH events of historic importance are happening in Mexico to-day, it is almost impossible to find out anything about them. From the meager news which trickles into the newspapers we catch glimpses of revolutionary programs, of moving armies, of a country so profoundly disorganized that civil law has practically disappeared and all security laid at the mercy of military chiefs. We see "generals" in a convention founded on no expressed popular assent making decisions for Mexico which may at any moment provoke widespread violence and entail unforeseen international consequences. But the facts as they come through the newspapers are so bare, the interpretations are so haphazard and inadequate, that no one outside of official circles in Washington can secure any sort of consecutive impression of what is happening. We know that Huerta is gone, we gather that the Constitutionalists are divided; and there the average man's knowledge stops. He is still vaguely aware that American troops occupy Vera Cruz, but over the question of their withdrawal he has not sufficient facts to make up his mind. Yet when we remember that conditions in Mexico have several times within the last years brought us to the verge of war, that within a few months the United States has actually seized a Mexican port, the failure of the press to keep us informed seems like a wanton neglect of duty.

It is all very well to fill newspapers and magazines with denunciations of the secret and undemocratic diplomacy of Europe. So long as our own foreign relations are left in darkness Europe might well retort that it is not for us to throw stones. In regard to Mexico the newspapers have an opportunity of showing that popular diplomacy in possession of the facts is more hopeful than the European entanglements they denounce. It is no Mexico. It is the business of journalism to make important events interesting by making them intelligible, and in Mexico the possibilities are always so explosive that easy-going ignorance is out of the question. Moreover, when it is claimed that the sensations of the war in Europe make everything else dull, it would be well to remember that our greatest contribution to the world just now would be an example of how a thoroughly informed and powerful democracy can promote the national interests of a weak and struggling neighbor.

WHEN President Jackson first laid down the proposition that the President is the direct representative of the people, there was a furious outcry from Congress, and Jackson's claim was denounced as an arrogant usurpation of the constitutional prerogative of Congress. The present attitude of Congress appears to be one of acquiescence. In a recent debate Senator Thomas, of Colorado, referred to the President as one "whom the people regarded, and constantly regard more and more, as their representative, as the protector of their interests, as contradistinguished from members of Congress, who, of course, represented only states and districts in states." Nobody had a word of objection to make to this statement, although it was enough to make Clay and Webster turn over in their graves. Quite in line with the doctrine of the President as the only representative of the nation is the President's letter reviewing and commending the work of Congress, which was printed in the Record with Representative Underwood's grateful acknowledgments. It comes to this, that Congress no longer pretends to represent the general welfare, but simply local and particular interests. That being the case, there is manifest need for the adjustment of political structure to the representative function of the President. To discharge that function properly the President should have the right to introduce bills and bring them to vote. National interest should at least have as fair an opportunity of obtaining consideration as district interests.

THE opposition to a minimum wage law for women is curiously compounded of interested employers, abstract theorists and conservative and radical unionists. It presents a picture of the I. W. W., department store managers, Samuel Gompers, and a half dozen professional economists fighting side by side. The relation between republican France and autocratic Russia is a simple harmony compared to this group of allies so single-minded for such various reasons. We do not pretend to have fathomed the reasons, for they range all the way from the reasons of employers who like sweating, through

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those of labor unionists who wish to monopolize the interests of the workers. In this network of confused opposition the New York State Factory Investigation Commission is now hesitating. The Commission is to report to the Legislature in January, but its decision is now in the making, and there is danger that the strength of the opposition may balk its recommendations.

Against every form of opposition must be weighed the supreme fact that there are industries in this State which do not pay enough wages to support life. Even if the minimum wage did not have behind it a long record of fairly successful practice, any proposal to end such a condition would be an experiment which New York State could afford to try, and should. No other agency has yet been suggested which reaches the most deeply exploited groups of women workers, and none which proposes in direct and dignified fashion to place within the state bulwarks below which American civilization shall not sink.

To those who complain that the sweated industries could not survive, the obvious and irrefutable answer is that industries which can't support themselves are uneconomic and should not be subsidized out of the health and sanity of their employees. If any subsidy is necessary, if the real cause of bad conditions isn't an intolerable inefficiency, then the subsidy should be public and frank. To those who fear State interference the reply is that voluntary action has failed. To those who point out that much of this sweated labor is incompetent the reply is that it must either be made competent or treated openly as a public charge. To those who realize the administrative difficulties of minimum wage legislation the reply is that wisdom and skill are made by experience.

ALTHOUGH Americans have responded with splendid generosity to the appeal of the starving Belgians, it becomes daily more apparent that no merely private philanthropy will suffice to meet this stupendous relief problem. Even in times of peace, millions of Belgians, because of their poverty, are chronically underfed; to-day starvation threatens to become universal. Year by year, despite a marvelously intensive cultivation of the soil, Belgium has become increasingly dependent upon foreign nations for her food. With the nation's ports now sealed by war, its railroads wrecked, its farm-horses killed or commandeered, its cattle gone, its harvest ungathered or confiscated, there is to-day no food for the six or seven millions of people still huddled in the little kingdom. The cost of feeding a whole nation should not be borne entirely England and France, deposit each month with the American government the sum of five or six million dollars, necessary for the most inadequate and partial relief of Belgian distress. Food could be shipped from this country, and by arrangement with Germany could be distributed that none of it would pass into the hands of Germans. The cost of such relief, even if it went further than mere food and amounted to one or two hundred million dollars during the year, could in the end be met by Belgium itself, or be paid for by the vanquished, and in any case it would be an inconsiderable item in the war budgets of the allied nations. The problem, however, is immediate. Unless something upon a national scale is done soon and is planned immediately, we shall witness the slow catastrophe of a whole people.

STUDENTS of financial phenomena are hard pressed for a satisfactory explanation of the increase of $111,000,000 in the gold holdings of the Imperial German Bank since the war began. Those of the Bank of England have increased even more ($162,000,000 since the low point in August), but that is different. London, though its stock exchange is closed and notwithstanding the English moratorium, is still the money center of the world, and has the power to command gold from other countries. Germany is financially and commercially isolated from all the rest of the world, save, of course, Austria, which in this matter does not count. The Imperial Bank could have built up its gold holdings only out of the national resources. What were they? It is supposed that the Kaiser's famous war chest was emptied into the Bank, but that would account for only $60,000,000, so that $50,000,000 would still remain to be accounted for. Where did that come from? One theory is that it has been "gained from the circulating medium," which is to suppose that people, instead of hoarding gold privately, have actually been surrendering it for bank-notes. That is a wholly unsatisfactory explanation, one financial writer declares, "unless all previous principles of political economy have been turned upside down." And why not? One weakness of political economy has been to disregard human emotion of the sort that does not turn its principle upside down. That could easily happen, for instance, in a country where the brides prefer iron rings to gold ones, and married women send their gold bands to be melted up for the war fund, replacing them with iron, as they are doing now and as they did one hundred years ago, giving the Emperor

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Force and Ideas

EVERY sane person knows that it is a greater thing to build a city than to bombard it, to plough a field than to trample it, to serve mankind than to conquer it. And yet once the armies get loose, the terrific noise and shock of war make all that was valuable seem pale and dull and sentimental. Trenches and shrapnel, howitzers and forts, marching and charging and seizing—these seem real, these seem to be men's work. But subtle calculations in a laboratory, or the careful planning of streets and sanitation and schools, things which constitute the great peaceful adventure of democracy, seem to sink to so much whimpering futility.

Who cares to paint a picture now, or to write any poetry but war poetry, or to search the meaning of language, or speculate about the constitution of matter? It seems like fiddling when Rome burns. Or to edit a magazine—to cover paper with ink, to care about hopes that have gone stale, to launch phrases that are lost in the uproar? What is the good now of thinking? What is a critic compared to a battalion of infantry? This, men say, is a time for action, any kind of action. So, without a murmur, the laboratories of Europe are commandeered as hospitals, a thousand half-finished experiments abandoned. There was more for the future of the world in those experiments than we dare to calculate. They are tossed aside. The best scholarship has turned press agent to the General Staff. The hope of labor is absorbed, the great plans built on the surplus of wealth are dropped, for the armies have to be financed. Merely to exist has become a problem, to live finely seems to many a derelict hope.

Yet the fact remains that the final argument against cannon is ideas. The thoughts of men which seem so feeble are the only weapons they have against overwhelming force. It was a brain that conceived the gun, it was brains that organized the armies, it was the triumph of physics and chemistry that made possible the dreadnought. Men organized this superb destruction; they created this force, thought it, dreamed it, planned it. It has got beyond their control. It has got into the service of hidden forces they do not understand. Men can master it only by clarifying their own will to end it, and making a civilization so thoroughly under their control that no machine can turn traitor to it. For while it takes as much skill to make a sword as a ploughshare, it takes a critical understanding of human values to prefer the ploughshare.

That is why civilization seems dull and war romantic. It is no wonder, then, that war, once started, sweeps everything before it, that it seizes all loyalties and subjugates all intelligence. War is the one activity that men really plan for passionately on a national scale, the only organization which is thoroughly conceived. Men prepare themselves for campaigns they may never wage, but for peace, even when they meet the most acute social crisis, they will not prepare themselves. They set their armies on a hair-trigger of preparation. They leave their diplomacy archaic. They have their troops ready to put down labor disputes; they will not think out the problems of labor. They turn men into military automata, stamp upon every personal feeling for what they call the national defence; they are too timid to discipline business. They spend years learning to make war; they do not learn to govern themselves. They ask men to die for their country; they think it a stupid strain to give time to living for it.

Knowing this, we cannot abandon the labor of thought. However crude and weak it may be, it is the only force that can pierce the agglomerated passion and wrong-headedness of this disaster. We have learnt a lesson. We know how insecurely we have been living, how grudging, poor, mean, careless has been what we call civilization. We have not known how to forestall the great calamity. We have not known enough, we have not been trained enough, ready enough, nor radical enough to make our will effective. We have taken the ideas that were thrust upon us, we have believed what we were told to believe. We have got into habits of thought when unnecessary things seemed inevitable, in panic and haste we stumbled into what we did not want.

We shall not do better in the future by more stumbling and more panic. If our thought has been ineffective we shall not save ourselves by not thinking at all, for there is only one way to break the vicious circle of action, and that is by subjecting it endlessly to the most ruthless criticism of which we are capable. It is not enough to hate war and waste, to launch one unanalyzed passion against another, to make the world a vast debating ground in which tremendous accusations are directed against the Kaiser and the financiers, the diplomatists and the gun manufacturers. The guilt is

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too preoccupied to care, afraid to move, afraid to change, eager for a false peace, unwilling to pay the daily costs of sanity.

We in America are not immune to what some people imagine to be the diseases of Europe. Nothing would be easier for us than to drift into an impossible situation, our life racked and torn within and without. We, too, have our place in the world. We have our obligations, our aggressions, our social chasms, our internal diseases. We are unready to deal with them. We are committed to responsibilities we do not understand, we are the victims of interests and deceptive ideas, and nothing but our own clarified effort can protect us from the consequences. We, too, can blunder into horror.

A Narrow Escape for the Democrats

THE returns of the election on Tuesday indicate that the Democrats have retained by a narrow margin their hold on the confidence of the country. Their majority in the House of Representatives has been cut down to the barely necessary figure. Their majority in the Senate will remain about stationary. But the loss, severe as it is, has stopped short of being disastrous. The Democrats remain in responsible and effective control of all the departments of the national government. They have managed to keep this control, as they gained it, not because anything like a majority of the voters are Democrats, but because of division among their opponents. In 1912 the larger proportion of the divided opposition were Progressives. In 1914 a vastly larger proportion are Republicans. Although the change is enormously significant, it does not affect the central fact, which is the continued ascendancy of the Democrats for at least two years more.

The Democrats deserved more success than they have obtained. The administration of President Wilson and its supporting majority in Congress have made a surprisingly good record. Their defeat at the polls would not have been a well-merited condemnation; it would have been due to a meaningless and purposeless fluctuation of popular opinion. The American people are to be congratulated on the fact that the reaction stopped short of being decisive, and that we are to be spared the spectacle of futile partisan squabbling which is the inevitable result of divided governmental control.

The Democrats came into power pledged to accomplish a tolerably progressive economic program by means of the traditional partisan political machinery. They were to be progressive, in the sense that American public opinion understands pro-

gressivism to make them any less loyally partisan. Under the relentless yet adroit leadership of President Wilson they succeeded in reconciling their apparently incompatible objects much better than had the Republicans. Their success in satisfying the progressive element in public opinion was sufficiently indicated by the embarrassment of their opponents. In order to justify their own party progressivism, the Progressives needed to fasten upon the Democracy the stigma of being reactionary; and this they were totally unable to do. Their campaign did not rise above an unsuccessful attempt to defeat certain local "bosses," who were more generally Republican than Democratic, and whose candidacy had in every case been endorsed at a direct primary election. The Republican vote benefited from the weakness of the Progressives and the consequently renewed vitality of the bipartisan system; but as an alternative to the Democrats they certainly cut, in reference to the merits of the discussion, a sorry figure. The best they could do was to raise the old and meretricious cry of business depression, and thus to betray how completely they were still living in the past. Under the circumstances the Democrats were fairly entitled to a longer lease of power.

During this campaign the Democrats made much of their legislative record, of which they could be justifiably proud. They had been courageous enough to eradicate the worst abuses of the protectionist system, and by so doing to incur a real risk of unpopularity in many farming and industrial districts. Their Federal Reserve Act brought about a desirable centralization of the banking resources of the country, while at the same time it satisfied the demands of local centers of business for a larger measure of financial independence of New York. The reorganization of the national banking system is the more remarkable, because it is the only example of constructive economic legislation ever passed by the Democratic party during almost four generations of continuous existence. It deserves to be considered as the most promising single achievement of President Wilson's administration. The anti-trust legislation also proved to be better than the preliminary advertisements prophesied. The Trade Commission Act has fastened upon an administrative body an immediate responsibility for preventing unfair competitive methods. The Clayton Bill will probably do more harm than good, but the final draft constituted such a marked improvement upon the earlier versions that in its capacity as substitute it can at least be considered an example of successful destructive legislation. Finally, the Alaskan Railway Bill and the other measures for making the natural resources in the public domain available for development were

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a uniformly good record must have been the result of an honest, intelligent, and insistent endeavor to legislate in the public interest.

Yet while the Democrats have remained ascendant, their ascendancy has become much more precarious and exacting. They have become more than ever a governing minority. Their very success in reconciling progressivism with Democracy has been slowly tending to consolidate the opposition. The influence of the progressive element within their own ranks will be weakened just in so far as the Progressive party falls to pieces and its members revert to Republicanism. Public opinion is acquiescent, but dangerously apathetic. The administration has enlisted a sufficient measure of popular respect, but it has not kindled popular enthusiasm or touched the popular imagination. The association of progressivism with partisan Democracy has made it more efficient for certain limited purposes, but less interesting and significant. The progressive movement has lost thereby singleness of purpose, alertness of intelligence, intensity of conviction, and a seductive vista of future achievement.

The work of a sincerely progressive democracy has only begun. The legislation passed by the Democratic party has not made any impression upon the more serious and difficult social and industrial problems of contemporary America. The consumer's need for a lower cost of living has been left unsatisfied; the business organization of the country continues to be wasteful and inefficient; the financial system of the Federal Government remains no less extravagant and irresponsible; nothing has been done to diminish unemployment, to improve the general standard of living, to remove the causes of increasing unrest among wage-earners. The President has sometimes talked as if his program of tariff revision, banking reorganization and anti-trust legislation contained a complete and final solution of the problems of modern American democracy. These measures are to provide for a new constitution of freedom, which is also a constitution of peace. If the President and his party are actually deceived by such phrases, they will pay dearly for their unintelligence. Nothing of any importance has as yet been accomplished to bestow freedom and peace on the American nation. The new Democratic Congress will be confronted with legislative responsibilities even graver than those which have already been met, and these new responsibilities will put their combination of partisanship with progressivism to a still severer test. The combination may survive, but if so, the Democracy will have to pay for the privilege of keeping such good company by abandoning many of their traditional shibboleths and by seeking an access of inward light and

The End of American Isolation

THE self-complacent isolation of a great people has never received a ruder shock than that which was dealt to the American nation by the outbreak of the European war. We have long been congratulating ourselves on something more than an official independence of Europe. We considered ourselves free in a finer and a deeper sense—free from the poison of inherited national antipathies, free from costly and distracting international entanglements, free from a more than incidental reliance on foreign markets for the sale of our products, free to make mistakes with impunity and to gather fruits by merely shaking the tree. We were more nearly self-contained, more completely the master of our own destiny, than any other nation of history. Yet this consummate example of political independence has been subjected to a visitation of fate almost as disconcerting as those which beset wandering Indian tribes. There broke over the country a European war which the American people individually and collectively were powerless to prevent or to mitigate, yet which may have consequences upon the future and policy of the country as profound and far-reaching as our self-made Civil War. Independence in the sense of isolation has proved to be a delusion. It was born of the same conditions and the same misunderstandings as our traditional optimistic fatalism; and it must be thrown into the same accumulating scrapheap of patriotic misconceptions.

The American nation was wholly unprepared to cope with such a serious political and economic emergency. It possessed no organization and no equipment with which to protect its citizens against the loss and the suffering caused by the war. It was equally unprepared to take advantage of the opportunities for an increase in foreign trade which the sudden belligerency of the European powers thrust into its hands. No disposition was shown to sit down patiently under the affliction. The industries and interests whose prosperity was affected jumped swiftly to the conclusion that a loss which was the result of an international crisis, and which was serious enough to threaten their own subsequent economic efficiency, should not fall upon themselves alone, but should be redistributed. They all promptly appealed to the government for assistance either in carrying the burden or in taking advantage of the unexpected opportunities. The railroads demanded an increase in rates as compensation for diminution in business. The cotton-growers tried to draw an additional five cents a pound for their cotton out of the United States Treasury. Congress was asked to provide the

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products to foreign countries; and it actually consented to place upon the nation the extraordinary risks of marine insurance. In every direction the need of more flexible and responsible national business organization was apparent, yet everywhere the country was obliged to put up with unsatisfactory makeshifts. There was no adequate political and business machinery for dealing with an essentially collective business emergency. Winter will soon set in without the making of a proper provision for the relief of the greatest sufferers from the war, who are not railroads or cotton-growers or brokers, but the increasing body of unemployed wage-earners. The national economic system has been wholly unable to meet the obligations, which in the opinion of the great majority of American citizens the war had imposed upon it.

The American people were as ill-prepared to meet the spiritual challenge of the war as they were to protect themselves against its distressing economic effects. Their sense of international isolation has bred in them a combination of crude colonialism with crude nationalism. In the beginning they constituted themselves into a supreme court, whose affair it was to sit in judgment on the sins of Europe. They passed the day in objurgating the war, in abusing Europe for bringing it to pass, and in crying for peace at a moment when there could and should be no peace. But their protests against the war did not prevent them from taking sides violently for or against the Allies, and from giving expression to latently bellicose sympathies and antipathies. They traveled so far along this road that President Wilson felt obliged to read them a lecture on the expediency and the moral grandeur of being neutral.

The instinctive colonialism of American public opinion was balanced by a similarly inconsiderate expression of national self-assertion. The United States was going to penalize Europe for engaging in the war by snatching away many of its existing superiorities. American manufacturers proposed to capture European trade in South America and the Orient. The profits of financing international commerce were to be transferred from London to New York. Fashions for women would be designed on Fifth Avenue rather than the Rue de la Paix. A great national revival in the fine arts would follow a cessation of the importation of painting, sculpture and music. The United States would be thrown back upon its own resources, and then it would show to Europe a full measure of national accomplishment.

When Americans indulge in these expectations they are merely being pursued by the evil spirit of their traditional national delusion—the delusion of isolated newer worldliness. The European war has make them independent of Europe, or to give them an advantage over Europe. Less than ever before will their geographical isolation result in genuine independence. No matter who is victorious, the United States will be indirectly compromised by the treaty of peace. If the treaty is one which makes for international stability and justice, this country will have an interest in maintaining it. If the treaty is one which makes militarism even more ominously threatening, this country will have an interest in seeking a better substitute. Neither will our merchants derive permanent advantages in their own or foreign markets as a result of the war. When it is over, European nations will immediately become both more efficient and more insistent competitors for foreign trade than they were before it began. They will be obliged as a matter of popular subsistence to reconquer and extend their markets. and they will therefore be better organized and equipped for the work. Thus the war has brought with it increasingly numerous and increasingly onerous American national and international obligations.

In its deepest aspect, then, the European war is a challenge to the United States to justify its independence. The nation can not be independent in the sense of being isolated. It can be independent in the sense of being still more completely the master of its own destiny. The control of its own destiny will not mean, as it has done in the past, merely the renunciation of European entanglements, because entanglements will inevitably ensue from the adoption of the positive and necessary policy of making American influence in Europe count in favor of international peace. Neither will the control of its own destiny by the American nation mean, as it has done in the past, its own control by a triumphant prophecy of prosperity. What it will mean is a clearer understanding of the relation between our democratic national ideal and our international obligations, and such an understanding should bring with it a political and economic organization better able to redeem its obligations both to its own citizens and to a regenerate European system.

The Land Question at Aguascalientes

THE action of the Aguascalientes convention in ordering the confiscation of the great Mexican estates and the redistribution of these lands among the peons seems for the moment to introduce a real issue into the conflict in Mexico and to raise that conflict above the plane of a mere jealous strife between rival leaders. It is at least a recognition of the fact that the Mexican malady is economic even more than political. To the aver-

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away Mexico City is a Villa, a Carranza, or a Zapata; it is of the utmost importance to him, on the other hand, whether he owns a bit of land or is a semi-servile laborer on an immense estate.

These vast estates constitute an economic problem both grave and difficult. It is difficult because agrarian conditions in Mexico vary from state to state and from district to district. They are not the same in the arid lands of the northern plateau and in the *tierras calientes;* in Chihuahua and in Chiapas; in the stock-raising belt and in the sugar, cacao and indigo districts. In many places there are small agrarian properties. But while the statement so often repeated that less than five hundred persons own all the land in Mexico is grotesquely false, still there exists the crassest inequality in land ownership. There are *haciendas* the size of grand duchies, and there are hundreds of thousands of men landless and without prospect of acquiring land. If ever there is to be the beginning of a hope of an enlightened, progressive, democratic Mexico, this vast disproportion between *hacendados* and peons, between land-owners and land-workers, must be destroyed.

Even though it be not destroyed immediately, the mere fact that this disproportion is being discussed by the assembled generals as Aguascalientes is decidedly significant. It suggests that there is a popular factor in the revolution, even though it be latent. It would be easy to exaggerate this factor. The military leaders are in the main not inspiring or disinterested men, however much they declaim of honor or patriotism. For the most part they seem like posturing dwarfs, strutting over the body of a sleeping giant. The masses of the people, on the other hand, are too lethargic to move or be moved. The majority is illiterate, and a minority consists of roving, naked Indians, ignorant even of Spanish. Much of Mexico is what it was in the days of Humboldt, and much is what it was in the days of Montezuma and Guatemotzin. And yet, as these deliberations at Aguascalientes indicate, a certain ferment is present. New wants, new dissatisfactions, new ideas seep in from beyond the Rio Grande, and where wages rise discontent spreads. The peon who earns thirty cents or twenty or nothing a day is wretched and content; the man in the north who earns his sixty or eighty cents in the mines or on the plantations is open to all sorts of revolutionary propaganda.

To this stirring of a popular imagination, to this rise of a popular interest, as yet in its beginnings, the revolution itself has perhaps contributed. In the main all this fighting is a regression, a reversion to an earlier routine, a backsliding to Bustamante, Santa Anna, and all the inglorious traditions of the heroic age of Mexican brigandage. None the breaks the chain of an ancient submission. By bringing together men from different villages and different states, it helps to destroy ignorance, lethargy and the narrowest localism. It is a hideous tragedy, but it is a way of "seeing Mexico."

If there were no such popular interest, there would be no such discussions as those at Aguascalientes. We should not have Zapata's "plan of Ayala" or Carranza's "plan of Guadalupe." Even were the deliberations a blind, a mere bid for popularity, covering a secret design to transfer estates from rich *Cientificos* to rich Villistas and Zapatistas, still the mere bid for popular support would be the sign of at least some faint popular interest. Even those who selfishly exploit a general discontent become the agents and servants of that discontent.

It is well to listen attentively to whatever is proposed towards the solution of Mexico's gravest economic problem. At the same time it would be absurd to hope too much from these deliberations. The problem is not merely one of subtraction and division. It is far more complex. It is rather the problem of completely altering the economic bases of society, a task comparable in intricacy with that which faced our Southern States after the emancipation of the slaves. In time of peace the mere administrative difficulties of any attempted solution might frustrate the best intentions; in war the obstacles are unsurmountable. And for the moment war seems likely if not inevitable. Even while non-combatant generals debate at Aguascalientes, fighting generals are preparing their soldiers for battle. It is Carranza against the field. Until that issue is decided, until this campaign and perhaps many other campaigns are ended, until some one dominating man or some one coherent group comes to power, it is idle to expect much from any plan of economic reorganization, however well-intentioned.

The Tolerated Unions

WHEN Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., steps forward as a defender of his employees against the union of their trade, and at the same time begins investigations looking to the betterment of general labor conditions, we wonder if there is not danger that the much championed and much investigated wage-earner will not in the end be killed with kindness. The workingman is to be given, not what he wants, but what is good for him. In a period of swift industrial regeneration he himself is to remain inactive and unheard, a mere grateful beneficiary. We note a similar development elsewhere. Factory laws, child labor laws, mini-

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hastily inscribed upon the statute book, and philanthropists and politicians lie awake nights contriving new plans of industrial amelioration. But all this goes hand in hand with a more grudging attitude towards trade-unionism, and a keener impatience with what is called the blundering and obstinacy of labor's representatives. Many well-intentioned people come to regard the trade union as obstructive and reactionary, a rigid and therefore dead part of a plastic industrial organism. In short, the union is played out. The labor problem is the first concern of the whole people, but is none of the laborer's business.

The danger of this attitude lies in the tendency to shove the union to one side, to substitute industrial betterment for industrial democracy, and thus to make the good the enemy of the better. The issue is not one between progress and stagnation, for practically all groups desire progress. It is rather the issue of the choice of agents by whom progress is to be made. Behind the conflict of interests there emerges a no less embittered conflict of clashing temperaments. You need only look at the scientific manager and at the trade-union leader to see that these men will not easily mix. The one is objective, quantitative, unemotionally exact, analyzing, stop-watch in hand, the minutest motions of a "personally conducted" day-laborer, as an entomologist studies a bug; the other is laxer, more voluble, more open to emotions that escape stop-watch and measuring rod, less logical, perhaps more real. These two men view the labor world from different vantage-grounds. It is not easy for them to establish a community of sentiment and outlook.

The social reformer frequently displays a similar antagonism to the union. It seems to him selfish, ignorant, inconsistent, harsh. The reformer may not understand the heavy emphasis laid by the union upon the closed shop, upon its own recognition, upon its right to boycott and to strike. He feels that shadowy abstractions are being opposed to solid advantages. He resents the suspicious attitude of labor organizations. Nor does he always understand the union philosophy. The trade unionist is not a college graduate. He does not explain clearly what he feels intensely. He speaks a language different from that of the social reformer. And yet in the course of the years it often happens that the wisdom of the reformer is turned into nonsense and the workman's obscure prejudice is vindicated. Why should a wage-earner object to receiving bonuses and premiums, which are a something added? Why should he oppose piece-rates, which reward each worker according to his ability? Yet decades of pace-setting and price cutting have conclusively demonstrated such devices. Similarly the trade-union attitude towards compulsory arbitration, the legal incorporation of trade unions, and other plans for industrial lubrication has not seldom been vindicated. What seemed a mere prejudice reveals itself later as a healthy instinct of self-preservation.

It is not that the unions are always right, still less always wise. There are trade union leaders who are only indifferently honest and others who, though incorruptible, are fanatical and formalistic, at once too inexperienced and too narrow-viewed to handle with tactful courage the delicate problems which arise daily. The trade union is a crude young democracy, with the failings and disappointments of a crude young democracy. It also suffers from the evils which inhere in all fighting organizations. It must constantly hold its own. It is, therefore, too slow to see good in the unaccustomed, too prone to view reforms as lures to the unwary. It suffers equally from the fact that it needs stability, and at the same time must adjust itself to an industrial environment constantly changing. It therefore shows strain and cleavage. Jurisdictional conflicts arise, and acrid disputes divide the movement into conservatives and radicals, into "pure and simple" trade unions asking only a fair day's wage, and flaming revolutionary organizations demanding the immediate abolition of the whole capitalist system.

But in truth, despite these internal conflicts, there is both unity and a principle in the movement. Whether the organization be a conservative railroad brotherhood, an industrial union like the coal miners, or a revolutionary industrial union like the Industrial Workers of the World, it is still a union. The varying philosophies are not so significant as the fact that wage-earners stand united for common purposes, for common defense, for common aggression. Whatever their philosophies, their principle is one. And that principle is intensely realistic. The union stands for power, for self-direction, for self-expression in industry, politics and affairs. No specific gain is nearly so important as the power that encompasses it. The unions are seeking to attain to this power through discipline and concert.

It is this very ambition of the union, half conscious and but half realized by its opponents, that gives rise to the opposition and ultimately renders it futile. It is easier to concede favors than to divest one's self of power, easier to increase wages than to surrender control of the shop. Yet in industry as in politics there must come such devolution of authority. Welfare work and all reform from above are valuable, but they are valuable only in so far as they aid and do not obstruct or divert the uneven progress of the wage-earner towards in-

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Has German Strategy Failed?

AT the close of the third month of the Great War, a month in which all things considered German fortunes have perceptibly waned, it is natural that the question should be raised: Has German strategy failed? Has the strategy of the Allies proved superior?

In the examination of this question it is necessary first of all to indicate that since German armies are still in France, Belgium and Poland, the failure has at most been relative, not absolute, conceivably temporary, certainly not yet to be reckoned permanent. But accepting this qualification, what is to be said of the methods of the great opponents, measured by present achievement?

First of all it is necessary to lay down the conditions of the colossal war game. Bernhardi himself has done this. Thus he wrote: "If Germany is involved in war, she need not recoil before the numerical superiority of her enemies. But so far as human nature is able to tell, she can only rely on being successful if she is absolutely determined to break the superiority of her enemies by a victory over one or the other of them before their total strength can come into action."

In other words, the German problem was to crush France before Russia could come up, or Russia before both France and England had their full strength in the field. Conversely, France, Russia and England were bound to strive to escape defeat in detail, until all three were in full strength.

There is a temptation now to argue that since Germany failed in both her great offensive thrusts, one at Paris, the other at Warsaw, while she has been inexpugnable on the defensive, it would have been wiser to assume the defensive at the outset. On this point Bernhardi is again illuminating. He said: "The defense as a form of fighting is stronger than the attack, but in the conduct of war as a whole, the offensive is by far superior to the defensive, especially in modern warfare." He meant, of course, that Germany, to win the war, must defeat her foes in detail, otherwise industrial paralysis might compel surrender while her frontiers were still unforced, since with England against her, the control of the sea would be lost, and with Russia and France standing with England the ultimate advantage of numbers would also be against her.

Germany was then bound to undertake the offensive. It remained for her general staff to select a method of crushing France before Russia came up. They chose the drive through Belgium. This brought both the British and Belgian armies into the field. Both contributed to German defeat. It may then be argued that it was a mistaken course to follow. But three months after the opening of the war, despite great effort, the Germans have not made a breach in the barrier forts of France through Belgium, German strategy chose wisely, always viewing the question from the military, not the moral aspect. But having passed through Belgium and penetrated deeply into France, the Germans detached several army corps and sent them to the east before the decisive battle. In something the same situation Frederick the Great sacrificed Berlin and won a great battle which regained his capital. Would William II. have been wiser to have followed the example of his great predecessor?

This point is debatable. British and French commentators insist that the Germans made a grave mistake. But it would be more conclusive to hear what the Russians have to say. Bear in mind that in the last week in August Russian armies were rushing on toward the Vistula, having beaten German armies in East Prussia, and were on the point of routing the whole Austrian military power in Galicia and Poland. Had they been permitted to continue their advance, they were bound to be in Silesia and Posen shortly. Already it was doubtful whether any success then possible in France could counterbalance the great disaster impending in the east.

Accordingly Hindenburg was sent east, where he promptly won the greatest German victory of the war, destroyed one Russian army, and checked the advance to Berlin for two months and more. Again German strategy seems to be beyond just criticism on any available evidence.

Defeated at the Marne and compelled to retire to the Aisne, the Germans promptly changed their plans and endeavored to do in Poland what they had attempted in France. Was this a sound strategical undertaking? Again Bernhardi's declaration stands. It was no longer possible to crush France, but England's million was not yet available, the Allies in the west were not yet in the field in full strength, Russia might conceivably be crushed. Indeed, Hindenburg's great victory held out glowing promise of such a triumph. Were it achieved, German position in France still made a resumption of the advance to Paris almost certainly possible. Meanwhile there was every present indication that if Austria were not promptly relieved, her whole field armies would be destroyed.

In this case, too, then, Germany strategy seems to have taken the wisest course. So far as it is now possible to judge, it failed at least as completely as in France. Was this the final evidence of the superiority of allied strategy? The question is plainly debatable, but it hardly seems conclusive to dispose of it thus.

Is it not fairer to say that German strategy made the best of the conditions imposed upon it by German diplomacy? Thanks to German diplomacy, the German General Staff was compelled to face

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action. Given this condition, it did its best, did all and the only things possible.

On the other hand, the Allies, once they were all in the campaign, were bound to have the advantage if they could escape immediate ruin. Their strategy was just as logically imposed upon them as the German upon the Kaiser. All things considered, they played it, if not so brilliantly, with sufficient skill. Looking back now it is possible to see real and remarkable coordination. When Germany struck at France, the French and British retired, but the Russians drove over into East Prussia and compelled the Germans to weaken their offensive in France. When the Germans invaded Poland, it was the Russians who retired, the French and British who stormed up into Flanders.

In sum, looking back over three months of war, what seems impressive is not any real or apparent failure of German strategy, but the unexpected adequacy of Allied strategy. Given the advantage of time, the eventual superiority of numbers, the immediate control of the sea, the Allies could only be defeated decisively in the opening weeks of the war, if they could be brought to battle under exactly the conditions the Germans desired. But German strategy could not impose these conditions upon the Allies, because German resources were not large enough; the statesman had set a task for the soldier beyond his strength. Napoleon with supreme genius failed at the same task in 1814 in his most splendid campaign. Again Bernhardi has the final word. He wrote: "When Napoleon, who so often and so brilliantly had beaten superior numbers with weaker bodies, wanted to enforce victory with an army so much weaker than those of his enemies that even the most famous local victories could no longer change their proportionate numbers, he succumbed, and he was bound to succumb."

Napoleon's failure was absolute, Germany's remains relative. But to argue from failure that the attempt was foolish, even to ascribe superior genius to Allied strategy, is to go beyond the evidence. In 1914 the problem of the Kaiser's generals was that of Napoleon in 1814. In the earlier instance the nearness of success has for all time justified the strategy. The same is fairly to be said of the later experiment, and in neither case was there any conceivable alternative. FRANK H. SIMONDS.

The Empire of the East

THE war in Europe has lasted three months, and it is too soon to say what it is all about. The issues at stake in any war rarely emerge quite clearly until the settlement is in sight. Before the war began, it looked like a madman's dream to make a hecatomb of all the armies of Europe over the grave of the Austrian archduke, very much as the Scythians sacrificed slaves over the dead bodies of their chiefs. In its early weeks it took the dramatic form of a struggle to avenge the violation of Belgian neutrality. It may become, before it is ended, a battle for world empire in which the chief stakes will be distant colonies and "places in the sun."

But one issue behind all these phases will certainly persist. It is a war for the empire of the East. From the Continental standpoint, this struggle is really the postponed sequel of the two Balkan wars. The inner meaning of the original Balkan League has hardly yet been grasped by public opinion in western Europe. When Servia and Bulgaria concluded a secret treaty of alliance in the spring of 1912, under Russian auspices, they had two objects in view. One of these was the liberation of Macedonia from Turkey, primarily for Bulgaria's benefit. The other, which Russia regarded as the chief object, was an attack upon Austria, and the creation of a great Servia at her expense.

I have been told by Balkan diplomatists who [illegible] in England and France, but it was well known to the German government. It led to the last menacing increase in the peace effectives of the German army, which were defended at the time as the answer of the German powers to the menace of Pan-Slavism. There followed by way of reply reorganization of the Russian armies, and the return in France to three years' service.

This colossal struggle for the hegemony of the East has been the volcanic foundation of European politics ever since Russia and Austria quarreled over Bosnia in 1909. It has been imminent ever since the Balkan League was founded in 1912. If the war is fought to a clear decision, if either group of powers can master the other, the destinies of the East are sealed. In the one event the German Powers will dominate the Balkans, Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean; in the other it will be a Slavonic hegemony which will stretch from the Adriatic to the Persian Gulf.

It is something of a paradox that with this momentous issue hanging over it, the Balkan Peninsula, outside Servia, is only just beginning to be involved in war. Too many old resentments have stood in the way of a straight pursuit of national interests. Take, for example, the case of Roumania. She has much to gain from the defeat of Austria, for three million Roumanians await impatiently their liberation from the onerous Magyar yoke. It is customary to explain the early inaction of Roumania by the fact that the late King Carol

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sympathies of his subjects. When she rewarded the valor of the Roumanian troops at Plevna by seizing the Roumanian province of Bessarabia, she made of this vigorous little state an almost irreconcilable enemy. She kept the resentment alive by subjecting the Roumanians of Bessarabia to a process of forcible denationalization more ruthless than the Magyars have ever attempted. The reason why Bulgaria has so long held aloof is familiar and recent history. Russia, partly because she has never found in the Bulgarians docile satellites, and partly because her court detests King Ferdinand, allowed and even encouraged the spoliation of Bulgaria in the Treaty of Bucharest. The idea was, of course, to teach the Bulgarians a lesson, and to render King Ferdinand's position intolerable.

It was a rash experiment to play upon a stubborn people. The result is that Servia has had to fight the first round of her hard battle against Austria alone, and that such deep resentment divided Bulgaria and Roumania that it was difficult to conceive any feat of diplomatic finesse which now would avail to bring them together as allies. They have none the less one fundamental instinct in common—the dread of finding their independence overshadowed by the extension of Russian power. It is this dread which has so far kept them neutral. Clearer thinking and a sharper insight into the future might have led them to a somewhat different conclusion. For the one hope of real independence for the Balkan States lies in the prompt and solid reconstitution of the Balkan League, with Roumania as one of its partners.

The hesitation which Turkey has at last overcome needs no interpreter. Of all the many resentments which she cherishes against Christian Powers, the deepest and most permanent is that which she feels against Russia. The sentiment has this justification in calculation, that the gravest menace to her territorial integrity comes from Russian designs upon Armenia. These ambitions, since Russia began to treat her own Armenians well, have now the support of some Armenians and of some influential friends of the Eastern Christians in England. If Turkey could hope to win a success as Germany's ally in some corner of the vast battlefield, she has also before her the alluring prospect of winning Egypt from England.

But there are other considerations which ought to have inspired her with caution. She owed her preservation twice in the last century to Anglo-Russian jealousies. She is probably astute enough to understand that these jealousies, though they may one day revive, have for the moment utterly vanished under the stress of a graver peril. Turkey has been bluntly told that if she goes to war at Germany's bidding, it will be her ruin. What that means in plain words is probably understood at the Porte. It means, as I hear on good authority, that England would no longer oppose or even deprecate the seizure by Russia of Constantinople. [illegible] had suggested to her that Germany is really able to protect her. While she hesitated, she had quite adroitly chosen a partial satisfaction for herself by repudiating the capitulations.

My views on that subject will probably be regarded as heretical by American readers, but I have held them for many years. Some transitional system ought to be arranged; but with this reserve, it seems to me, every instinct of tolerance and liberalism pleads for the abolition of the capitulations. They were a device for stamping a whole race with a sort of legal inferiority. While they lasted, every consulate was an organized insult, every foreign resident a reminder of Christian contempt for Islam. The capitulations have done ten times more evil by fostering Turkish resentment and fanaticism than they have done good by protecting foreign rights. One cannot lift a race by a code of systematic humiliation.

The war will certainly end, if it has any decisive result, in settling the hegemony of the East. The mischief of the modern system of alliances is that it is commonly made workable by a partition of spheres of interest. It is doubtful whether, in the event of a victory for the Triple Entente, the Liberal Powers will exert or seek to exert any great influence on the settlement of the near East. They will incline to respect Russia's province. If English opinion had its way, the iniquitous Treaty of Bucharest would be subjected to drastic revision. Englishmen would welcome the creation of a great Servia and a great Roumania.

But the more one emphasizes the principle of nationality, the more intolerable is it that those who profit by it should themselves defy it. Servia and Roumania both hold, the one in Macedonia and the other at the mouth of the Danube, territory inhabited by Bulgarian people. They hold it, moreover, with a harshness and a disregard of common human rights which overshadows anything in the records of Prussia or of Russia. The Bulgarian church and the Bulgarian language are utterly suppressed, and this Macedonian population, better educated and more advanced than the village population of Servia proper, is held down under martial law, without a pretence of home rule, or so much as an illusory concession of electoral rights. Bulgaria, on the other hand, at once enfranchised even the Turks in her new territories, and has already allowed them to vote.

It is pleasant to express a facile enthusiasm for small nationalities, but for my part I feel that emotion chilled when I reflect that some of these small nationalities are themselves behaving like the largest and oldest of empires. The identity of Albania will probably be preserved by the ambitions of Italy. But one of two things must happen before Macedonia is liberated—either Bulgaria will make her peace with Russia by substituting Prince Boris for King Ferdinand, or else British statesmen must make up their minds to exact [illegible]

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The Spirit of Stockholm

SOMEWHERE in Stockholm there is a little park, rather deserted, with some white statues, a fountain and a kiosk. I discovered it first, I remember, two years ago on a hot August day, and I sank then into its green, comforting, silence with a happy sigh of gratitude.

With that same sigh I sink into it again now, here in this city of blue rippling water and green forest. There is a peace here that cannot, I verily believe, be found just now in any other town in Europe. To-morrow I must go on again, but for twenty-four hours at least there will be at my side the spirit of this place, assuring me that the world is just as it used to be—how many ages ago?

On the afternoon that I left Hull the rain came down, a hissing torrent. On the boat we were a cosmopolitan company, two Russians, three Swedes, five Englishmen and a German. We all of us tried to forget that a week earlier the "Runo" had been sunk by a mine, and the captain told us that it would be four days at least before we reached Christiania. We did our best, I am sure, to be pleasant to one another, but we were suspicious and detestably conscious of our German companion. Mines, Louvain, Belgian refugees, Dinant—and here he was, stout, with large spectacles, mild blue eyes, the mouth of a sentimental child, eyeing us now apologetically, now almost fiercely, responding suddenly to some little courtesy on our part, remembering that we were his enemies, and might, had things been otherwise ordered, be at this moment engaged in splitting open his head with a shell. No, it was not pleasant.

On the third day our ship was whirled into a storm, and we were all of us, I think, very ill. I know that Herr S. was horribly indisposed, because I could hear him, from my cabin, calling loudly upon his Fatherland. Rolling upon my own berth, sympathizing daily with him, I knew that in seasickness, at any rate, there are no nationalities.

Then, approaching Christiania, we slipped suddenly into a gray mirror of a sea, above it a sky of smoking, flaming scarlet. Herr S. appreciated deeply its splendour, sighing, wiping his spectacles, seeing in it who knows what "daemmerung" of hopes and placidities and pleasures, all the tranquillity of a contented life, flung at one man's call into limbo. I know that he would have turned and demanded my admiration had we not, of course, been enemies.

In Christiania one was still pursued. The hotel was littered with German newspapers. On every side there are huge headlines, "90,000 Russian Prisoners," "Rising of Natives in India," "Socialist Disaffection in England." The world is thundering at one, "Defeat, defeat, defeat." Seasickness and mines are a poor prelude just now to German newspapers. During my night journey to [illegible] preceded by two German on the electric light and discussed German victories with pointed and over-eager volubility. Sleep was nothing to them. They sang their war song until seven of the morning. As the train slipped into the Stockholm station they turned to me, and with an exaggerated bow wished me good-morning.

And here, suddenly, the plague is stayed. I know, sitting in my little green park, that Stockholm has preserved its soul in peace, and is telling me that so I must preserve mine. That is not to say that Stockholm is not interested in the war. Its papers have huge headlines, in many windows there are maps with coloured flags, there are military photographs in the bookshops, and little eager groups of argument at the street corners. Moreover, Sweden is pro-German. Russia, with Finland in its grasp, is too near at home; the Baltic is too narrow. Stockholm is conscious of the war, but the war has not touched its spirit, that remote, beautiful, plangent tranquillity born of the thick forests and the myriad islands and the lakes that are about it.

Between the dark, cool trees of my little park there is a break, and against the blue evening sky a white curving bridge runs. Up and down this bridge little toy figures, moving swiftly, but to me, so far from them, with a remote silence, like coloured marionettes, pass and repass. Those moving figures are all of the living world that I can see, and the evening peace finds its voice in the measured note of a church bell.

To-morrow I cross the Baltic. Already two Swedish steamers have been stopped in their crossing and searched for Englishmen; from one of them thirty Englishmen were politely handed over to the courtesy of German detention. By this time to-morrow I may be a German prisoner, and in any case, if I escape that fate, I shall, in Petrograd, be once more plunged into the whirlpool of the war. Here, for a day, I have been encouraged to believe that the time will surely come when once again the old values, the old friendships, the old sympathies and understandings will assert themselves, that flaming, angry sky above Christiania giving no more the true colours of the picture than the sacking of Louvain represents the normal character of mankind.

Beyond my park there is one of Stockholm's many quays. I cannot see it from where I am sitting, but I can fancy its colours, the piled wooden green trees reflected in the waters of the opposite shore, the blue ferry-boats, the red and black funnels of the steamers. To-morrow once again I shall search the papers for news of the war, shall be alarmed at this rumour and rejoice at that, shall see in the streets of Petrograd the mourning that the women of Russia are wearing for their sons. To-night the little coloured figures dance across the fairy-bridge, the gold of a splendid sunset steals into the dark chequer-board of the trees. . . . They are playing, I see, "Rigoletto" at the Opera

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The Cotton Crisis

WHEN we denounced the Brazil coffee valorization scheme as an extortionate monopoly, we did not dream that we should within less than three years give serious consideration to a similar scheme for sustaining cotton prices. Still further were we from dreaming that out of the non-interventionist South would arise a movement for the introduction of a method of economic control that may be of more varied and far-reaching possibilities than any now regularly employed by the government. Yet such has been one of the results of the crisis in the cotton trade. Our cotton growers and all the miscellaneous interests based upon cotton production have been placed in a situation analogous with that of the Brazilian coffee producers at the opening of this century. And, political traditions to the contrary notwithstanding, the South is ready to demand governmental intervention of a nature very similar to that which has been employed in Brazil.

Four-fifths of the coffee of the world comes from Brazil; not far from three-fourths of the cotton comes from the United States. In the single Brazilian state of Sao Paolo is produced one-half of the world's supply of coffee; in our own state of Texas, between one-sixth and one-fifth of the world's supply of cotton. The whole economic life of Sao Paolo is bound up with the price of coffee. In the years 1897 and 1898, when coffee sold at an average of sixteen cents, existing plantations prospered and new plantations were laid out at an astonishing rate. In the evil years of the opening century, when coffee dropped as low as 3.55 cents (August, 1903) mortgaged plantations in great numbers fell under the hammer, merchants were ruined and banks failed. No part of our own country, it is true, is specialized to cotton production to the extent that Sao Paolo is specialized to coffee. Nevertheless, twelve-cent cotton means prosperity throughout the South, and six-cent cotton would mean widespread distress, especially in the state of Texas.

The huge coffee crop of 1906-1907 (twenty million bags, as compared with an average crop of twelve millions) forced upon the attention of the Brazilian mercantile community and the state government, the inadequacy of a *laissez-faire* policy in the matter of this chief staple. The present European war, with its attendant disorganization of markets consuming one-third of the world's cotton supply, is producing a similar effect upon American opinion. As was the case in Brazil, it is assumed here that the emergency to be met is temporary, that a restoration of normal conditions cannot be long delayed. The experience of Brazil has proved, however, that such an assumption is fallacious. We might corner the existing supply of cotton tion goes on unchecked we shall find that the impounding of supplies is a disastrous policy. If the government enters upon a policy of supporting the cotton market with its credit, it will never be able to withdraw without loss unless, like Brazil, it resorts to methods of controlling production.

The Brazilian method of control of the coffee market consists, in the first place, in the warehousing of the existing supply, and the limitation of shipments from the government warehouses to such amounts as will not depress prices unduly. In the second place, shipments on private account are checked by a heavy export duty. By its control of the conditions under which coffee is accepted at the warehouses, the State is able to keep production within bounds. Those who are urging the Federal and State governments to "valorize" cotton overlook the fact that existing constitutional restrictions make it impossible for us to control production through direct State action. It may be constitutional to warehouse the existing supply, and thus postpone the final slump in prices or distribute the loss over several years. But we cannot restrict production through export duties nor, probably, through excises. Accordingly, in so far as the cotton depression is likely to prove chronic unless production is readjusted, we appear to be quite without effective lawful remedies for the evils of the situation. Whatever palliative measures we may adopt, it seems that we must endure the slow and painful process of adjustment through the action of individual producers under the crushing weight of ruinous prices.

Certainly such would be the course of events if we possessed no other means of industrial control than the repressive or the subsidizing activities of the traditional organs of government. But we have in our banking system an unacknowledged governmental organ, perhaps the more potent because it is developing spontaneously to meet the public need. In recent years there have been occasions when banking associations, believing that crops were being held off the market unwisely, have forced more rapid movement through limitations upon credit. The great financial houses have frequently exerted a steadying influence upon industry through restraint upon projects that were designed to inject a cut-throat competition into a situation otherwise satisfactory.

The banks hold the key to the cotton situation. If the banks choose, the area planted to cotton next year can be reduced in such proportion as they may deem wise. The suggestion that they should thus assume control of the industry has already been made in unexpected quarters. Secretary of Agriculture Houston is credited with the proposal that the

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reduce the acreage devoted to cotton, and that the bankers should refuse to lend to merchants who do not impose such restrictions on the farmers.

At first sight it may appear that control of an industry by the banks has absolutely nothing to do with government control. And this is, of course, true in so far as the banks exert control solely with a view to their own private interest. What is proposed by Secretary Houston is that the bankers should go beyond their own interest, and assume control for the good of the cotton growers themselves and of the general community. This would clearly be to assume a governmental function. It is worth noting that it is precisely by this process of assumption of public functions by private interests that new governmental organs are created.

The banker's interest is closely bound up with the general interest of the community, and there is probably no class better fitted than the bankers to undertake the control of industry. Yet the irresponsible exercise of governmental functions by any class, however enlightened and public-spirited, cannot be tolerated by the modern state. Are the bankers, however, in such a position that they may take action without the support of the regularly constituted authorities?

The history of every modern state shows that the higher the degree of banking development, the closer the relation with government. The banks of England, France and Germany are frequently forced by the government to subordinate their private interests to the public welfare. Our own banking system is less highly developed, yet instances of public control are occurring with increasing frequency. We may recall the measures recently employed by the Secretary of the Treasury to check the "hoarding" of money by the banks, and to secure the flotation of the Tennessee loan. If the banks should undertake to regulate the production of such a staple as cotton, we may be sure that the Treasury would proceed to increase correspondingly its control over the banks.

At present the chief source of the influence that the Treasury can exert upon the banks is the discretionary power of deposit of surplus public funds. Such funds fluctuate constantly in volume, and at best are a relatively small item in the accounts of our banking system. But if the government should undertake in earnest to sustain the price of cotton, it would be forced to raise funds to the extent of several hundred millions wherewith to advance credit upon warehoused cotton. The operations thus begun could hardly be closed out without loss, short of several years' time; the sales of cotton from warehouses in the winter and spring would set free public funds that would not be required for sustaining the market until the following season. Such funds in the meantime would be deposited in banks, and by their manipulation the Treasury would be able to dictate to the banks a loan policy [illegible] general interest

upon the industry, may it not at some later time be called upon to "valorize" wheat or fruit or tobacco? Why indeed should it not do this? The alternation of underproduction and overproduction is generally admitted to be an unmitigated evil. In the industrial field it has largely been done away with through consolidation. In the field of staple production, efforts to stabilize the market through mutual agreement between producers have been numerous but unavailing. If stability is desired in this field, there is no simpler method of attaining it than through the control of credit funds by the government, acting through the banks.

Such control would not be confined to repression alone. It would refuse credit for the expansion of an overdeveloped branch of production, but it would also extend credit for the introduction of new branches and for the expansion of those unduly neglected. Its influence would indeed be confined to those producers who depend upon borrowed capital; but these, as the weakest producers, are the ones most likely to follow slavishly the branch of production to which they are accustomed. They are also the ones who suffer most severely from the consequences of overproduction, and would therefore most properly be subjected to control.

ALVIN S. JOHNSON.

The Duty of Harsh Criticism

TO-DAY in England we think as little of art as though we had been caught up from earth and set in some windy side street of the universe among the stars. Disgust at the daily deathbed which is Europe has made us hunger and thirst for the kindly ways of righteousness, and we want to save our souls. And the immediate result of this desire will probably be a devastating reaction towards conservatism of thought and intellectual stagnation. Not unnaturally we shall scuttle for safety towards militarism and orthodoxy. Life will be lived as it might be in some white village among English elms; while the boys are drilling on the green we shall look up at the church spire and take it as proven that it is pointing to God with final accuracy.

And so we might go on very placidly, just as we were doing three months ago, until the undrained marshes of human thought stirred again and emitted some other monstrous beast, ugly with primal slime and belligerent with obscene greeds. Decidedly we shall not be safe if we forget the things of the mind. Indeed, if we want to save our souls, the mind must lead a more athletic life than it has ever done before, and must more passionately than ever practise and rejoice in art. For only through art can we cultivate annoyance with inessentials, powerful and exasperated reactions against ugliness, a

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So it is the duty of writers to deliberate in this hour of enforced silence how they can make art a more effective and obviously unnecessary thing than it has been of late years. A little grave reflection shows us that our first duty is to establish a new and abusive school of criticism. There is now no criticism in England. There is merely a chorus of weak cheers, a piping note of appreciation that is not stilled unless a book is suppressed by the police, a mild kindliness that neither heats to enthusiasm nor reverses to anger. We reviewers combine the gentleness of early Christians with a promiscuous polytheism; we reject not even the most barbarous or most fatuous gods. So great is our amiability that it might proceed from the weakness of malnutrition, were it not that it is almost impossible not to make a living as a journalist. Nor is it due to compulsion from above, for it is not worth an editor's while to veil the bright rage of an entertaining writer for the sake of publishers' advertisements. No economic force compels this vice of amiability. It springs from a faintness of the spirit, from a convention of pleasantness, which, when attacked for the monstrous things it permits to enter the mind of the world, excuses itself by protesting that it is a pity to waste fierceness on things that do not matter.

But they do matter. The mind can think of a hundred twisted traditions and ignorances that lie across the path of letters like a barbed wire entanglement and bar the mind from an important advance. For instance, there is the tradition of unreadability which the governing classes have imposed on the more learned departments of literature, such as biography and history. We must rebel against the formidable army of Englishmen who have achieved the difficult task of becoming men of letters without having written anything. They throw up platitudinous inaugural addresses like wormcasts, they edit the letters of the unprotected dead, and chew once more the more masticated portions of history; and every line they write perpetuates the pompous tradition of eighteenth century "book English" and dissociates more thoroughly the ideas of history and originality of thought. We must dispel this unlawful assembly of peers and privy councillors round the wellhead of scholarship with kindly but abusive, and, in cases of extreme academic refinement, coarse criticism.

That is one duty which lies before us. Others will be plain to any active mind; for instance, the settlement of our uncertainty as to what it is permissible to write about. One hoped, when all the literary world of London gave a dinner to M. Anatole France last year, that some writer would rise to his feet and say: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are here in honor of an author who has delighted us with a series of works which, had he been an Englishman, would have landed him in gaol for the term of his natural life." That would have shown that the fetters of the English artist are not light as much of that as any reasonable person could want, so much as the liberty to describe this and any other passion with laughter and irony.

This enfranchisement must be won partly by criticism. We must ridicule those writers who supply the wadding of the mattress of solemnity on which the British governing classes take their repose. We must overcome our natural reverence for Mrs. Humphry Ward, that grave lady who would have made so excellent a helpmate for Marcus Aurelius, and mock at her succession of rectory Cleopatras of unblemished character, womanly women who, without education and without the discipline of participation in public affairs, are yet capable of influencing politicians with wisdom. When Mr. A. C. Benson presents the world with the unprovoked exudations of his temperament, we may rejoice over the Hindu-like series of acquiescences which take the place of religion in donnish circles. The whole of modern England is busily unveiling itself to the satirist and giving him an opportunity to dispute the reverences and reticence it has ordained.

But there is a more serious duty than these before us, the duty of listening to our geniuses in a disrespectful manner. Criticism matters as it never did in the past, because of the present pride of great writers. They take all life as their province to-day. Formerly they sat in their studies, and thinking only of the emotional life of mankind—thinking therefore with comparative ease, of the color of life and not of its form—devised a score or so of stories before death came. Now, their pride telling them that if time would but stand still they could explain all life, they start on a breakneck journey across the world. They are tormented by the thought of time; they halt by no event, but look down upon it as they pass, cry out their impressions, and gallop on. Often it happens that because of their haste they receive a blurred impression or transmit it to their readers roughly and without precision. And just as it was the duty of the students of Kelvin the mathematician to correct his errors in arithmetic, so it is the duty of critics to rebuke these hastinesses of great writers, lest the blurred impressions weaken the surrounding mental fabric and their rough transmissions frustrate the mission of genius on earth.

There are two great writers of to-day who greatly need correction. Both are misleading in external things. When Mr. Shaw advances, rattling his long lance to wit, and Mr. Wells follows, plump and oiled with the fun of things, they seem Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Not till one has read much does one discover that Mr. Shaw loves the world as tenderly as Sancho Panza loved his ass, and that Mr. Wells wants to drive false knights from the earth and cut the stupidity and injustice out of the spiritual stuff of mankind. And both have to struggle with their temperaments. Mr. Shaw believes too blindly in his own mental activity, h-

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extravagant ecstasies of the fanatic, and broods over old hated things or the future peace and wisdom of the world, while his story falls in ruins about his ears.

Yet no effective criticism has come to help them. Although in the pages of Mr. Shaw enthusiasm glows like sunsets and the heart of man is seen flowering in a hundred generous and lovely passions, no one has ever insisted that he was a poet. We have even killed his poetry with silence. A year ago he lightened the English stage, which has been permanently fogged by Mr. Pinero's gloomy anecdotes about stockbrokers' wives and their passions, with "Androcles and the Lion," which was a miracle play and an exposition of the Christian mysteries. It taught that the simple man is the son of God, and that if men love the world it will be kind to them. Because this message was delivered with laughter, as became its optimism, English criticism accused Mr. Shaw of pertness and irreverence, and never permitted the nation to know that a spiritual teacher had addressed it. Instead, it advised Mr. Shaw to return to the discussion of social and philosophical problems, in which his talent could perhaps hope to be funny without being vulgar.

Mr. Wells' mind works more steadily than Mr. Shaw's, but it suffers from an unawareness of the reader; an unawareness, too, of his material; an unawareness of everything except the problem on which it happens to be brooding. His stories become more and more absent-minded. From "The Passionate Friends" we deduced that Mr. Wells lived on the branch line of a not too well organized railway system and wrote his books while waiting for trains at the main line junction. The novel appeared to be a year book of Indian affairs; but there were also some interesting hints on the publishing business, and once or twice one came on sections of a sympathetic study of moral imbecility in the person of a lady called Mary, who married for money and impudently deceived her owner. And what was even more amazing than its inchoateness was Mr. Wells' announcement on the last page that the book had been a discussion of jealousy. That was tragic, for it is possible that he had something to say on the subject, and what it was no one will ever know. Yet this boat of wisdom which had sprung so disastrous a leak received not one word of abuse from English criticism. No one lamented over the waste of the mind, the spilling of the idea.

That is what we must prevent. Now, when every day the souls of men go up from France like smoke, we feel that humanity is the flimsiest thing, easily divided into nothingness and rotting flesh. We must lash down humanity to the world with thongs of wisdom. We must give her an unsurprisable mind. And that will never be done while affairs of art and learning are decided without passion, and individual dulnesses allowed to dim the brightness of the collective mind. We must weepingly leave the library if we are stupid, just as in the middle ages we left the home if we were lepers. If we can offer the mind of the world nothing else we can offer it our silence.

REBECCA WEST.

Panic In Art

ONCE a year for the last six years art has been reborn and named successively: Post-Impressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Orphism, Synchromism and Vorticism. And each conception is assumed to have the finality of a miracle. In the uproar of rival christenings the accredited Cubist pamphleteer announces "Cubism is painting itself." The Futurist manifesto proclaims, "We inaugurate a new epoch of painting." A Synchromist confided to me, "Ours is the last painters' movement; there can be no other." One conviction, however, they hold in common: art, which has been the courtesan of princes and the holiday playmate of republics, is dead. Painting, which began with Giotto, has completed its cycle, and a new art made possible by a new freedom is to begin.

We are faced with it, the freedom to paint hair green, thighs blue, and tables out of perspective; the further freedom to dismember any object and scatter its parts in dynamic rhythm; the ultimate right to evolve whirlpools of color splashed by flaming pinwheels in which the last traces of the object to the artist.

standing. The painter promptly intimidates the critic by declaring that this is beauty too new and too strange for him to see.

Now it is essential to realize that not even the maddest of modern canvasses is a hoax nor the strangest a mystery. For in this new movement there is nothing mysterious we need approach with awe. Nothing is hidden except its motives. It is not primarily a revolt against the realism of Courbet or the impressionism of Monet. The energy that animates it is nothing so trivial as a desire to scandalize the pontiffs of academic art. The new in recent art is the expression of two impulses, the first a panic-stricken attempt (Post-Impressionism) to recover our lost innocence of the eye, the second (Cubism, Futurism, etc.) a frantic endeavor to achieve forms so pure and beauty so abstract that they would be a new absolute. Both are ineffectual and both are significant because they are phases of an inevitable revolt against an unavoidable criticism growing every year more intolerable

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of enthusiastic allegiance to some historic type of beauty by which the artist educates his sense of design and form becomes an immense critical labor. Instead of an immediate native tradition there is a bewildering array of historic tradition to choose from. The sculptor, for instance, not only compares Greek statues with Egyptian, Hindu bronzes with Chinese monuments, but he must compare Phidian marbles with archaic Attic bas-reliefs, and later Egyptian monoliths with examples of the first dynasties. He cannot take Greek art in general, or any other art, as his model; his knowledge of it is already too complete. Forty years ago the mere sight of the first Japanese prints to reach Europe determined Whistler's sense of composition, Van Gogh's draughtsmanship, Monet's secession from the Barbizon School. But already the painter knows that Hokusai and Hiroshighe are decadent and merely popular illustrators to the Japanese themselves, and that if he wishes to school himself in Oriental art he had better learn to appreciate Harunobu or the Chinese landscape paintings of the Sung period, unless he finds that the Orient after all reached a more complete expression in Persian miniatures. The creative energy of our time is not only exhausted by enthusiastic erudition, but our power of appreciation is itself drained by incessant criticism, the necessity for a continual revaluation of all aesthetic values before we can achieve any aesthetic criterion whatsoever.

Is it surprising that painters and sculptors ended with a forlorn sense of the wisdom of ignorance, that, utterly weary of the burden of sophistication, their only ultimate enthusiasm should be for every primitive period of art in which they could regain a sense of seeing with the uneducated gaze of the savage and the childlike eye? There followed ten or fifteen years in which every type of primitive simplicity was revived: the simplification of drawing, the distortion of the nude, the color schemes of pure reds, blues and yellows which raised shrieks of protest. The sculptor discovered negro wood-carvings of the African coast and "went in" for a barbaric feeling for form. Portraits were painted which had the ponderous strength of Byzantine mosaics, every feature heavily outlined in black. Landscapes became patterns as simple and direct as Persian tiles.

As in all revivals, much was recovered that was permanently valuable. Color achieved a new splendor. Painting acquired an intrinsic beauty of material, a sheer loveliness of texture, as of lustreless enamel or Italian majolica. Our sense of decoration was reborn. For any canvas of Matisse more genuinely ornaments a wall than a mural painting by Chavannes. All the elements for the making of a great tradition of mural painting were resurrected, but painting was too irretrievably obsessed with its search for salvation to use them. The nostalgia of eclecticism remained, while the conviction grew more and more irresistible that everything had been done and there was no use doing it over. The visible world was no longer real to him. Significantly enough, Picasso, collector of death-masks and totem-poles, was the first to emancipate himself from the object.

So we have had the rise of five or six "Damn-the-Object" schools. The cubists proclaim, "The mission of the artist is to divest objects of their banal appearance and to fashion the real image of the spirit." The painter is to search for "the plastic essence of the world," tending to express itself as "a colored mathematics of things." Observe the absolutist's contempt for the merely phenomenal world. Objects are appearances, thin and unreal things. Vision is only a form of illusion; reality is elsewhere. The artist pondering on the nature of his art begins to reflect on the nature of reality. And with phenomenal ingenuity he creates fantastic systems of graphic symbols to express naive systems of metaphysics. The cubists are particularly preoccupied with the nature of space and volume, and though they insist that "pictorial space" is "non-euclidian," they express their conviction in canvasses full of cones, cylinders and cubes. The futurist parodies Democritus: "Our bodies enter into the canopies on which we sit, the couches enter into our bodies, the autobus hurls itself into the houses it passes, the houses hurl themselves upon the autobus and merge with it."

The second revolution, like the first, ends in the past. The revolutionary painter, seeking the most uniquely modern goal he can imagine, has fallen victim to an ancient hunger—a poetic impatience to rend the veil of appearance, a poignant eagerness to be one with the hidden essence of being. He has expressed again his own weariness, a desire to lose himself in a world his eye can no longer dominate or understand. The latest pamphlet calls this "The Art of Spiritual Harmony." Well, it is an essentially mediaeval conception of the relation of man to his universe. It is a scholastic's answer to the problem, though the middle ages did not attempt to delineate it in paint. The cubist and the futurist are at best modern monks illuminating with fantastic grotesques the margin of an esoteric manuscript. And if certain of their canvasses of triangles and circles seem like cabalistic signs, it is because, like Faust, they are calling up the Earth-Spirit.

Yet there is no need of echoing Kenyon Cox that painting is going to the dogs, or of whimpering with all the instructors that art is dead. Whatever you may mean by death, be certain of one thing: Art may die innumerable deaths, if that is the metaphor you choose to adopt. It will not stop. The twin impulse to ornament and to play is an eternal passion. This kneading, thumping, hammering, cutting and smearing of materials into shapes and patterns is an incessant energy, and the habit of making easel pictures is only one of its phases. For the moment, painting is sealed in a test-tube of aesthetic experi-

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The War and the Future of Civilization

THE defense alleged by all the nations at present involved in the European war hinges upon the necessity of their continued existence to insure the future of civilization. Nor can we claim with a shadow of truth that the insistence upon this point is more vigorous at Berlin than it is in London or in Paris. We shall surely be lacking in fairness if we question the sincerity with which all these European nations tenaciously cling to the notion that they are indispensable to the happiness of future generations. We shall, however, be quite as lacking in candor and intelligence if we fail to see that each of these nations assumes a knowledge of the ultimate end and aim of civilization, coupled to a clear insight into the process by which that ultimate aim must be attained, to an ability to see the chain of connection binding the present to this dim and ultimate future, and, of course, to an analysis of the present situation so complete and accurate as to distinguish the elements necessary to insure the future.

We find it personally a little difficult to concede to any of the nations the gift of prophecy and an ability to read the writing in the stars. Can we be absolutely positive that the future of the human race, let us say, depends upon the ruling of Asia, Africa, or South America by any European nation? In the face of the fact that every religious creed which has shown any strength in history has come out of Asia, can we believe that upon the direction of the occidental nations depends the spiritual progress of the human race? We find in Europe at present two different notions of administration; one called parliamentary government, and the other bureaucratic government. The one works admirably in England, and rather badly elsewhere; the other is astonishingly efficient in Germany, and less conspicuously useful in other countries. Shall we not really need the powers of a seventh son to tell which of these is more essential to the world at large? We find in England a notion of individual liberty which, on the whole, allows the individual to do pretty much anything he wants to until some other individual sues him in court. The government is to arbitrate between the two, but is to direct neither. In Germany the government promulgates sets of rules regarding the conduct of individuals toward each other, and compels individuals to observe them. The citizens of both nations claim that the results are as nearly ideal as anything is likely to be in this imperfect world.

If we look into the past, we shall find it difficult to concede to any generation the ability to tell in advance what will benefit or will injure civilization. The downfall of political Greece, which seemed to ture forever, was in fact the instrumentality by which Greek culture was spread throughout the civilized world and made almost universal. Scarcely a Roman citizen could have been found in the fourth century, A.D., who would not have bewailed the invasions of the "barbarous" Germans as the death of civilization. Indeed, educated men were pretty positive for nearly a thousand years that the Barbarians had destroyed civilization. Of this the Renaissance had no doubt whatever, and named the centuries subsequent to the fall of Rome and previous to their own time as the dark ages, when the light of civilization had been quenched. It is an astonishingly different notion of the Barbarian invasions which we find in the pages of ardent Teutonists like Lamprecht or Chamberlain. They are quite convinced that those centuries saw the dawn of civilization. In 1630 Gustavus Adolphus arrived in Germany for the purpose of saving civilization, which he identified with Protestantism, yet he succeeded (as most authorities are now agreed) in wrecking and desolating Germany, and he was certainly one of the chief authors of her poverty and weakness in the two succeeding centuries. Nor do we see at present eye to eye with the savior of civilization in 1815. Louis XVIII and the Duke of Wellington now occupy quite unenviable positions as blind reactionaries in the path of progress, while for those masters of foreign politics, George Canning and Metternich, whose policies and speeches impressed their contemporaries as utterances divinely inspired, we have scarcely a respectful word. Yet in 1815 there was probably no individual whom his contemporaries would have considered sane who did not breathe fervent prayers of thanks in the belief that the future of civilization was now assured, having passed into the hands of its saviors.

Do we not also learn from the history of the past that it is almost impossible for contemporaries to judge correctly in deciding whether resistance to aggression is really a safeguard for the future or merely an attempt of the obsolete and the outworn to retard progress? Few men would now shed tears upon the remains of political Athens; still fewer bemoan the sowing of salt upon the ruins of Carthage. A cold and unsympathetic reception awaits the advocate of the usefulness of imperial Rome of the fourth century A.D. There can be absolutely no doubt that the monasteries rendered indispensable service to the cause of civilization in the early middle ages, not only by the preservation of art and letters, but by the preservation of technical skill in many mechanical trades. But in the sixteenth century the monastic orders had no friends

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tion, and there are not many students to-day who are inclined to question the general gain for civilization by the breaking of their power.

Surely, if in the whole range of history we come upon a country which believed its own efforts indispensable for the progress of the race, it was Renaissance Italy, and it was more nearly right than contemporaries usually have been; but the political power of Italy was then, and remained until the nineteenth century, a shadow. Few countries in the whole history of the race have achieved such wholehearted and unanimous admiration as France possessed in the eighteenth century. Its very name was synonymous with what was to contemporaries civilization itself; its loss or destruction would have seemed irreparable. Yet in 1815 practically the whole civilized world congratulated itself upon the downfall, nay, upon the practical destruction of France, and upon the consequent saving of civilization.

If there is anything in the tenet of the relativity of truth, we have not now and are not likely to have any notion of what is really indispensable to the future of civilization, because we have not and cannot have a definite notion of what the future of civilization is. It ought to be sufficient for us to remember that northwestern Europe, which we now look upon as the seat of civilization, was, at the birth of Christ, scarcely known to be upon the globe, and was in all honesty believed by scientists to be the place where the world came to an end and space began. And in the history of the race and of the world two thousand years are but a moment. In reality we are dealing to-day with essentially different notions of civilization, of its object, of the methods necessary to attain it, of the hands which will perform the work. It is the difference of opinion about the future which lies at the root of the present difficulty, and in that opinion we shall find, as in a looking-glass, the images of the nations as they successively step forward. They differ in their national character, their ideas of morality, their ideas of the future because of their past. Their national aims and ambitions are the result of the history of Europe, the result of their deep hatreds, antagonisms, and rivalries during the fifteen hundred years since their ancestors poured down from the forests of the North upon the provinces of decadent Rome. From such a long and tangled past have come deep-rooted ideas, intense passions, strong beliefs, determinations to prevail. It is with these we have to deal.

Somehow, in some way of which we know nothing, the future civilization will emerge, as in the past, from the clash of these ideals and ambitions. The past makes it clear that civilization will be safeguarded, whatever happens. The future no more depends upon a single race or a single nation than a nation depends upon a single individual. When we talk of worlds, of aeons of time, of the human race itself and the future of its civilization, nations, like individuals, become pygmies and alvance what the future is going to be, we cannot tell in advance which of us will render the service which will be seen a thousand years hence to have been important; but surely we can all be pardoned for believing that we have some part to play in it. The real problem with which we have to deal is not that of providing for civilization's future, but that of providing for the immediate future of those of us who are now alive. ROLAND G. USHER.

In a Schoolroom

THE other day I amused myself by slipping into a recitation at the suburban high school where I had once studied as a boy. The teacher let me sit, like one of the pupils, at an empty desk in the back of the room, and for an hour I had before my eyes the interesting drama of the American school as it unfolds itself day after day in how many thousands of classrooms throughout the land. I had gone primarily to study the teacher, but I soon found that the pupils, after they had forgotten my presence, demanded most of my attention.

Their attitude towards the teacher, a young man just out of college and amazingly conscientious and persevering, was that good-humored tolerance which has to take the place of enthusiastic interest in our American school. They seemed to like the teacher and recognize fully his good intentions, but their attitude was a delightful one of all making the best of a bad bargain, and co-operating loyally with him in slowly putting the hour out of its agony. This good-natured acceptance of the inevitable, this perfunctory going through by its devotees of the ritual of education, was my first striking impression, and the key to the reflections that I began to weave.

As I sank down to my seat I felt all that queer sense of depression, still familiar after ten years, that sensation, in coming into the schoolroom, of suddenly passing into a helpless, impersonal world, where expression could be achieved and curiosity asserted only in the most formal and difficult way. And the class began immediately to divide itself for me, as I looked around it, into the artificially depressed like myself, commonly called the "good" children, and the artificially stimulated, commonly known as the "bad," and the envy and despair of every "good" child. For to these "bad" children, who are, of course, simply those with more self-assertion and initiative than the rest, all the careful network of discipline and order is simply a direct and irresistible challenge. I remembered the fearful awe with which I used to watch the exhaustless ingenuity of the "bad" boys of my class to disrupt the peacefully dragging recitation; and behold, I found myself watching intently, along with all the children in my immediate neighborhood, the patient activity of a boy who spent his entire hour in so completely sharpening a lead-pencil that there was nothing left at the end but the lead. Now what normal boy would do so silly a thing or who would

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atmosphere, his action had a sort of symbolic quality; it was assertion against a stupid authority, a sort of blind resistance against the attempt of the schoolroom to impersonalize him. The most trivial incident assumed importance; the chiming of the town-clock, the passing automobile, a slip of the tongue, a passing footstep in the hall, would polarize the wandering attention of the entire class like an electric shock. Indeed, a large part of the teacher's business seemed to be to demagnetize, by some little ingenious touch, his little flock into their original inert and static elements.

For the whole machinery of the classroom was dependent evidently upon this segregation. Here were these thirty children, all more or less acquainted, and so congenial and sympathetic that the slightest touch threw them all together into a solid mass of attention and feeling. Yet they were forced, in accordance with some principle of order, to sit at these stiff little desks, equidistantly apart, and prevented under penalty from communicating with each other. All the lines between them were supposed to be broken. Each existed for the teacher alone. In this incorrigibly social atmosphere, with all the personal influences playing around, they were supposed to be, not a network or a group, but a collection of things, in relation only with the teacher.

These children were spending the sunniest hours of their whole lives, five days a week, in preparing themselves, I assume by the acquisition of knowledge, to take their places in a modern world of industry, ideas and business. What institution, I asked myself, in this grown-up world bore resemblance to this so carefully segregated classroom? I smiled, indeed, when it occurred to me that the only possible thing I could think of was a State Legislature. Was not the teacher a sort of Speaker putting through the business of the session, enforcing a sublimated parliamentary order, forcing his members to address only the chair and avoid any but a formal recognition of their colleagues? How amused, I thought, would Socrates have been to come upon these thousands of little training-schools for incipient legislators! He might have recognized what admirably experienced and docile Congressmen such a discipline as this would make, if there were the least chance of any of these pupils ever reaching the House, but he might have wondered what earthly connection it had with the atmosphere and business of workshop and factory and office and store and home into which all these children would so obviously be going. He might almost have convinced himself that the business of adult American life was actually run according to the rules of parliamentary order, instead of on the plane of personal intercourse, of quick interchange of ideas, the understanding and the grasping of concrete social situations.

It is the merest platitude, of course, that those people succeed who can best manipulate personal intercourse, who can best express themselves, whose ceed in any form of society. But has there ever been devised a more ingenious enemy of personal intercourse than the modern classroom, catching, as it does, the child in his most impressionable years? The two great enemies of intercourse are bumptiousness and diffidence, and the classroom is perhaps the most successful instrument yet devised for cultivating both of them.

As I sat and watched these interesting children struggling with these enemies, I reflected that even with the best of people, thinking cannot be done without talking. For thinking is primarily a social faculty; it requires the stimulus of other minds to excite curiosity, to arouse some emotion. Even private thinking is only a conversation with one's self. Yet in the classroom the child is evidently expected to think without being able to talk. In such a rigid and silent atmosphere, how could any thinking be done, where there is no stimulus, no personal expression?

While these reflections were running through my head, the hour dragged to its close. As the bell rang for dismissal, a sort of thrill of rejuvenation ran through the building. The "good" children straightened up, threw off their depression and took back their self-respect, the "bad" sobered up, threw off their swollen egotism, and prepared to leave behind them their mischievousness in the room that had created it. Everything suddenly became human again. The brakes were off, and life, with all its fascinations of intrigue and amusement, was flowing once more. The school streamed away in personal and intensely interested little groups. The real world of business and stimulations and rebounds was thick again here.

If I had been a teacher and watched my children going away, arms around each other, all aglow with talk, I should have been very wistful for the injection of a little of that animation into the dull and halting lessons of the classroom. Was I a horrible "intellectual," to feel sorry that all this animation and verve of life should be perpetually poured out upon the ephemeral, while thinking is made as difficult as possible, and the expressive and intellectual child made to seem a sort of monstrous pariah?

Now I know all about the logic of the classroom, the economies of time, money, and management that have to be met. I recognize that in the cities the masses that come to the schools require some sort of rigid machinery for their governance. Hand-educated children have had to go the way of hand-made buttons. Children have had to be massed together into a schoolroom, just as cotton looms have had to be massed together into a factory. The difficulty is that, unlike cotton looms, massed children make a social group, and that the mind and personality can only be developed by the freely inter-stimulating play of minds in a group. Is it not very curious that we spend so much time on the practice and methods of teaching, and never criticise the very framework itself? Call this thing that goes on in

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A Change in Shaw

Pygmalion, a romance in five acts, by G. Bernard Shaw. Presented at the Park Theatre, New York, Oct. 12, 1914.

IF a play has breath in its body, it lives outside as well as inside the theatre. Tragedy or fantasy, comedy or farce, it goes with us from the footlights to the street. It may fade, like a glance of understanding. It may be forgotten, like a sympathy outlived. But however fleeting its impression, it must, if it is to withstand criticism, persuade us that its allegiance is to life. It must, that is to say, survive the mere galvanic hour. Like true eloquence in the orator, it must abide the morning after, in a world without glamor or enthrallment. And it will abide if it has awakened within ourselves that sanction to which dramatic method is simply the vivid aid.

Bernard Shaw has, of course, been singularly a dramatist of life. He has been blamed for using his characters as mouthpieces, and for decoying them merely to surprise or amuse us. The criticism is fair, in so far as he has served his purpose at the expense of his characters' individuality. People in real life are never entirely like people in Shavian plays. Their motives are not so exact. Their emotions are not so amusingly meretricious. Their language is not so pellucidly logical. But where Shaw touches reality is in his dramatization of conventions and codes. It is easy for us now to believe that we came honestly by our own mental receptivity, but a whole theatric generation has had the benefit of the sharpest critical intelligence of his age. Shaw received English-speaking audiences into a theatre cloyed with sentiment and muffled in tradition. He found them full of precious assumptions about character and circumstance to which it was the constant habit to defer. He sent people home with a new sense of their own principles and prejudices, as if they had endured a healthy though uninvited dispute. He gave to current morals a different and vastly more intelligible meaning, and did it through the challenged mind rather than through the mobile heart. He has, at any rate, up to the present, always raised expectancies as to social intention and perception which, despite any flippancy of situation, he has never failed exuberantly to fulfil.

Up to the present, however; for "Pygmalion" marks a sharp and vital change. A thing to see, it is also a thing to laugh with and enjoy, a comedy of quite diverting skill. Coming from success in Germany and England, it is already established here as one of our most inviting plays. But, facile in the theatre, laying springes for our laughter, it expires with the tenancy of one's chair.

Consider, first, the slightness of "Pygmalion." The scene is darkest London. At its center, huddled in a rainstorm under the gaunt portico of St. Paul's in Covent Garden, sits a flower-girl, the trampled lily of Cockaigne. To this guttersnipe, in the midnight shower, comes a brusque, fraternal gentleman, the man of hard words and gentle deeds. But, unlike his counterpart in "The Unsocial Socialist," this is a practical reformer, a phonetic expert, a wizard in vocables. In a few months, he muses loudly, he could give the guttersnipe the articulation and the soul of a duchess. Convert her speech, convert her manners—she'll be a lady as good as any in the land. He surveys her broodingly, thrusts a banknote on her, scowls at thanks, and disappears.

Something in this girl answers the clarion of Henry Higgins. She arrives next day to hire, with his own bounty, his magic aid. He accepts her, but with conse- however, he leaves his plastic girl to Henry Higgins, departing with a frank, unchristian wink. Eliza is thereupon washed, scrubbed and put in the forcing-bed, to be gingerly transplanted, after three months, for the social scrutiny of a Chelsea flat. Eliza acts the human pianola to her master's anguish and delight. He next ordains a garden party, a Gethsemane, and here Eliza triumphs. The trick is accomplished, she's a lady, a penniless, beautiful woman on the professor's bachelor hands. He storms at the problem Eliza now presents, and she, passionately human, hates him for loving him. They exchange "brute" and "liar," create a situation, fly asunder, and later, after a burlesque frenzied chase, unite. The union is deferred for the reappearance of Eliza's father, now endowed by a funny-column American millionaire, and converted into a funny-column social reformer. The father departs, to point a skit on the ascent to marriage via property, leaving Henry Higgins to expound Shaw's favorite crux, "I can't live with her, and I can't live without her."

Here, then, is a fantasy of gossamer texture, requiring for its reality a wealth of humor, of sympathy, of art. It is almost as if Shaw had been allured by the winsome muse of J. M. Barrie, only to be deserted, poor victim of inveterate intelligence, the moment that Eliza left her slum. It is not Eliza that is at fault, but the arid sympathy of Shaw. Forced, for lack of realizing her warm and touching possibilities, to see her as purely comic, Shaw had to make people respond by methods invented for the stage. She is bribed with chocolates and silks, and her bribery makes us laugh. She bewilders the stage housekeeper, and we smile. She upsets the "silly ass" at a British afternoon tea, and we grin. She ejects "bloody," and we roar. We are then prepared for excruciating references to the "pre-digested cheese trust," speeches on "middle class morality" and fortunes juggled to suit theatric needs. But all the time we imagine a real Eliza, unlike this comic butt, who would have justified a very different mirth.

Farce, perhaps, is also worth our while. But one judges this is accidental farce. As comedy, at any rate, it is spurious. Shaw has stooped to fabricate a play. It is only fair, however, to ascribe some of this delinquency to the cast. It is hard to believe that any part could have survived the conscientious over-acting of Mr. Merivale as the professor. He kept jumping on imagination's toes. Mr. Edmund Gurney, on the other hand, awakened delighted appreciation as Eliza's father. If he captivated every soul in the theatre, it was by richest reference to life. I felt sorry when Mr. Gurney returned in the last act. He was set to spur a very jaded muse.

But if Mr. Gurney was the gem, Mrs. Campbell was the high and radiant star. Of autumn—if stars are seasonal—there was no more than the faintest sigh in her performance. Forbidden by the dramatist any excursion into her own opulent and seductive regions, she exquisitely declined to adapt Eliza Doolittle to her personal proclivities. Without verve, but with enveloping skill, she attained utter fidelity to the Cockney wench. As the flower-girl, the bullied pupil, the phonetic doll, the eventual woman—from seed to bud and bud to flower—she was fully and beautifully resourceful. In that part one might yearn to see a young creature of such pulsing humanity that one would turn to her for the poignancy of her springtime and the wonder of awakening sex. Yet here is a triumph without a single adventitious aid. Incidentally, Mrs. Campbell's voice was memorably lovely. There is for everyone a cadence in words like "moon" and "swoo-"

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Books and Things

ALL writers, according to Anatole France, are condemned to solitary confinement. I quote from the English edition of "La Vie Litteraire": "We are shut up in our own personality as if in a perpetual prison. The best thing for us, it seems to me, is to admit this frightful condition with a good grace, and to confess that we speak of ourselves every time we have no strength to remain silent." A friend of mine, a rival of Mr. A. B. Walkley in his devotion to these words, has embroidered upon them after this fashion, which he calls "Magnum Opus":

> My book is of the past. A shadow falls,
> Blue, Greek, serene, across this Attic page.
> In this, a murmur of the Middle Age
> Echoes and dies along Italian walls.
>
> My book is of the present. Young Love's wings.
> He loves, she loves. "O, let him marry her!"
> Softly, I pray. The wedding will occur
> After he's busted a few trusts and things.
>
> My book is of the future. Here on earth
> Both sexes travel their eugenic way
> To Heaven, and sex war has its day.
> The story closes with my hero's birth.
>
> All these my subject. On an upper shelf
> It hides, my dusty duodecimo.
> I never read it. It contains, you know,
> A hundred thousand words about—myself.

A good war poem, whenever anybody writes one, will be welcome, but I can't understand disdain of the war poetry that has already found its way to the United States. Most of it is merely claret on the tablecloth and the kindest criticism is a pinch of salt. Many of the poets are now in the trenches. Neither they nor the stay-at-homes have had time to shape imaginatively such material as the war has brought them. Conceive, if you please, some planet where disobedient water flowed uphill, where the goodness of God was apprehended by the devout as flushing the universe at certain seasons only, where the flesh of men fell off their bones in autumn, and skeletons walked the winter until spring. I should hardly expect my favorite poet, if transported thither, to supply me at once with an imaginative reaction upon a planet so peculiar. At first he could not listen to the music of the sphere on which he was marooned. He would be too intent upon making sense out of the libretto. Let us, therefore, deal gently with poets whom patriotic impulse or a noble, unintelligent aspiration to be worthy of a great moment, has too early set to work. The war is not yet a subject, except for the rhetoricians. Some day it will find its great poet. I am content to wait for this day, unless the great poet, by not being born yet, keep me waiting too long.

I trust I haven't implied that taking his time insures a writer against the rhetorical danger. Paul Hervieu, you may remember, was profoundly disorganized by the Dreyfus case. For two years he could do no work. The idea of guilt haunted him. A crime of one kind or another had been committed and the guilt had not been fixed. He was cured of his distraction at last by writing "L'Enigme," one of the Dreyfus case's queerest by-products. In its first form the play ended without giving up its secret. It did not tell us which of the two wives, *Giselle* or *Leonore*, had been guilty of adultery. We found this out in the second version of the play before the first act was for M. Hervieu to have conceived and been delivered of a thoroughly unrhetorical play. Such was not his good fortune. But the time did prove long enough for him to get clean away from all temptation to dramatize the Dreyfus case, with which the play has nothing whatever to do. "L'Enigme" serves as a measure of the distance which may separate the impression which causes a work of art from the impression it leaves, a record of how far from his springboard the diver may come up.

You lift your eyebrows, do you, at my calling "L'Enigme" a work of art? Would have lifted them, you say, even if you had not read the sincere destructive pages in which M. Romain Rolland attends to M. Hervieu's case? I don't mind. While I yield to many, to very many, in my liking for "L'Enigme," it spoke to me, in spite of the mechanism so laboriously and naively installed in its first act, with singular directness. There is much in it that repels me. Even for such a short and violent story it is too loud, too bare, too obviously a strict follower of its constructor's blue-print. The characters seem always to be self-consciously thinking, "We mustn't say or do anything irrelevant. M. Hervieu will scold us if we're in the least irrelevant." They are ever in their great taskmaster's eye. Yet the play did make me feel what at the hour of starting for the theater I had only known, that death is a barbarous, anachronistic punishment of adultery, that an adultery which ends in murder or suicide ends badly.

I remember being on a glacier once, with two other men. We had lost our way, we were cold and hungry, darkness was coming on. Professed lovers of the open air for about a month every year, professed scorners of cities for exactly the same period, we should have welcomed, on that August night, even a city to dwell in. We were in no danger so long as we did not move, for an ample moon was scheduled and would, in a few hours, be lighting us off the ice, but we were temporarily wretched. Nothing to eat, nothing but glacier water to drink, nothing to smoke. One of my friends, searching his rucksack more profoundly, made a noise of discovery—cigars! He produced them one by one. One, two—only two in all, and three smokers. In a flash a truth I had long known came all the way home to me. One and one do not make three. Since that moment I have seen points of resemblance between life and Paul Hervieu. An evening with him, like that evening on the glacier, turns old knowledge into feeling.

Only two or three of his *tragedies bourgeoises* have been given in this country. I wonder why all of them, except the earlier criticisms of French law, have not been translated and published. Something would be lost, of course. English cannot be coaxed or bullied into that modern equivalent of French alexandrines which M. Hervieu often intends, yet he must be less difficult, with his rather stiff declamation and his want of grace, than his lighter-handed contemporaries. Speeches are more easily translated than talk, the purple of prose than the fine linen. His plays are largely scenario, and scenarios die hard. The importance of children, the power of a child to keep the separation of its parents from becoming a perfect separation—themes like these are exportable. The most general of the impressions M. Hervieu makes on me he would still make, I am sure, through any translation. I should distinguish, above the creaking of his dramaturgy, the

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Mr. Wells Avoids Trouble

The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman, by H. G. Wells. New York: The Macmillan Co. $1.50.

SOMEWHERE in "The New Machiavelli" H. G. Wells pictures himself surrounded by piles of manuscripts discarded in an effort to find a true account of his story. When I finished reading "The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman" I wondered whether Mr. Wells had not passed beyond the stage of rejecting any part of his own work as inadequate. For though this latest book is amusing, and perhaps useful, it is a careless book written with comfortable facility out of the upper layers of his mind. You say to yourself, Wells has turned out another book. You cannot say to yourself, as you could of his earlier work, Wells has learned from fresh experience and Wells is giving of that experience. For "Tono-Bungay" and "The New Machiavelli" were wrung with tortured sincerity out of a man's own life, and they were scarred and shapeless with the effort; they seemed to stammer inevitably into Wells's famous suspension points, with their own inner need for the elusive fringes of the truth.

Since he wrote "The New Machiavelli" Wells seems like a man who has retired to live in the country on the proceeds of his accumulated spiritual capital. Where formerly each book had been a fresh adventure and a new conquest, these later ones seem like creations from an armchair which cost little and give little. No doubt it is understandable that men should grow weary of danger, that arctic explorers should become lecturers and that old soldiers should write their memoirs, that Wells should plagiarize Wells. Few men who write have driven themselves as he has driven himself. The old Wells seemed to be living in a chronic crisis, in which there were immense visions and shattering disappointments, a gorgeous socialism breaking its heart over the actual facts. In the characters he created love was a pursuit in which the woman his hero desired was always just beyond the one he possessed. He was forever adjusting his hope to reality, trying almost in agony to find in England a home for his dreams. And because that struggle was relentless, Wells has come to typify the modern man, his weakness and his constant relapses, his tentative hope and his overwhelming tasks.

For what distinguished Wells among the Utopians is the fact that his Utopia was never finished and that every new experience amended it radically. He was not content to indulge his fancy or to clamor for freedom. He seemed to live in that dangerous region where freedom is being tried and vision embodied. He seemed to be buffeted from both sides, challenged by his dreams which revolted at the compromises of reality, and assaulted by reality which denounced the emptiness of all dreams. He seemed to spend himself in that struggle—the severest that a man can face; and he seemed to win by a constant renewal of effort in which he refused to sink either into placid acceptance of the world, or into self-contained satisfaction with his vision.

But in his later books there has been an evident slackening of effort, betrayed at first by a too great fluency of style, an increase of mannerism, a tendency to large rhetoric, and to plots which creak along by accident. Worse than that, his heroines have become distant and beautiful, they have moved up in society as heroines do, so that of late a Wells heroine to have a soul and to suffer must also have a title. Moreover, the villain has appeared, as issue; you ascribe all the difficulties to him, and your story can proceed. But he is fatal to the truth, as the earlier Wells would have proclaimed on every page.

Yet here is the villain drawn as an uncannily malignant figure who is responsible for modern commercialism and for the suffering of generous souls like the wife, Lady Harman. "Poor Sir Isaac had lived like a blind thing in the sunlight, gathering and gathering, when the pride and pleasure of life is to administer and spend . . . ." And you take it from this book that only when he dies is freedom possible. At any rate, Lady Harman kisses the other man and the final note is a happy one. The earlier Wells, I think, would have begun the book there; he would have written the history of the marriage of well-meaning Lady Harman and well-meaning and inadequate Mr. Brumley. He would, in short, have faced the real problem of love and business and politics, which is not of black villains and of white heroines, but of maundering and confused human beings.

Wells has tried to write that book several times, but of late the effort seems too great for him, and so he writes instead these hasty, imitative, and somewhat querulous additions to the stock of the popular novel. There has perhaps always been in him a tendency to run away from his problem. His distressed heroes and heroines have fled to laboratories or gone up in balloons or committed suicide. He himself has fled recently from the business of reconstruction to a very thin picture of "The World Set Free." Generally he has conquered this weakness or compensated it by a great mass of honest speculation and vivid experience, but in this latest book the flight has become precipitate amidst a wreckage of abstract nouns in the plural and absurdly simplified accounts of human motive. For the mere fact that Wells has written about marriage as if the wife were all innocence and the husband all villainy is in itself the most distressing commentary on this book.

W. L.

The Right to Believe

The Mob, a play in four acts, by John Galsworthy. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 60 cents net.

MANY gallant creations have come from Mr. Galsworthy, but none deeper or more poignant than "The Mob." For a time Mr. Galsworthy seemed diverted. "The Pigeon" and "The Eldest Son" were characteristic, but they were slighter than seemed warranted by his powers. In this recent drama, however, (produced on the English stage last March and now published for the habituated reader of plays), he returns to a larger, more inclusive world. There is, moreover a change in mental temper. No longer does he blindfold himself and his reader to hold his scales impartially. He stands squarely before a common moral issue, and, while still reticent, commits himself as never before.

The beauty of courage has always stirred the soul of Mr. Galsworthy. This is a drama of the beauty of courage. By accident it relates to war, and since war is uppermost in people's minds perhaps the accident is happy. Mr. Galsworthy could not, in point of time, have calculated to help our groping sympathies, but because he adverts to the sharp problem of public action and private conscience his drama responds to the cue of the hour.

A British imperial exigency creates the situation in "The Mob." Several British subjects have been murdered by the natives of a powerful country, presumably in Africa. Feeling runs high in England and the id[illegible]

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belligerent patriots, and to send its soldiers to the front. One member of the government, however, Stephen More, the Under Secretary of State, realizes it is the typical device of Empire, the petty war of aggression. He loves his country, but he believes the great powers have got to change their ways in dealing with weaker nations. He is unalterably convinced against the war. In the teeth of an outbreak of actual frontier fighting, he goes straight to the House, to denounce his government's action, "agreeable to the blind moment, odious to the future." Greeted with anger, he is physically assaulted before he finishes, and is left with no course but to resign.

Such moral protests are not unusual in politics. They are generally regarded as creditable, though impractical. But in More's case a flag has been not lowered but raised. He is a man of forty, "with a fine-cut face, a rather charming smile, and the eyes of an idealist." The son-in-law of an old soldier, Sir John Julian, his friends are members of the ruling caste. Yet, in spite of the misunderstanding of them all, in spite of his wife's intense and passionate patriotism, he decides to stump the country. To everyone this seems madness; practically, in his wife's words, the action of a cur. His own constituents try to bend him. He falters, weakens, yearns to yield. But, when the first British reverses are followed by a savage burst of chauvinism, he holds to his need to speak his truth.

If Mr. Galsworthy manages in the first two acts to give one an extraordinarily vivid sense of every single human being introduced, it is nothing to the skill with which his next act captures the personality of a mean and angry mob. You realize from the forerunning acts More's inexplicable cause. His father-in-law thinks him a fanatic. His sister-in-law, with her husband at the front, is inevitably embittered. The editor who comes to see him demeans him as a political imbecile. The newspapers call him a degenerate. His servants begin to leave him. His wife, repelled by his inflexibility, turns to ice. His child, fresh from her nurse, asks: "What is an anti-patriot, stop-the-war one, Mummy?" With this behind him, he attempts to get his public hearing. He is greeted with jeers and laughs, hooted, stoned, and spat on. Immovable, the crowd hates him. Unyielding, it sullenly "lets 'im be." It is a short scene, but vile, appalling and truthful. There is no mitigation in their hatred of one who speaks a new language; and he, understanding, speaks without one change.

In this hour of gall, More returns to see his wife. During his absence she has tasted the penalties of his ungrateful courage. The servants have poured in unwilling ears the verdict of the street. Much worse than this muttering of intolerance is her sister-in-law's morbid vision of the war. The girl has seen her soldier-husband dead, and More comes back to learn that "dream bad dreams, and wait, and hide oneself—there's been nothing else to do." In the pity and tenderness that surge in him at this recital, his wife attempts to make him cease his fight. "It shall be me—and everything." For a moment he takes her to him, then sees the pit beneath him, shrinks back, and stands away. "It is as if a cold and deadly shame had come to them both. Quite suddenly More turns, and, without looking back, feebly makes his way out of the room."

A less heartfelt drama might close with this enticement, but these people are human beings, interwoven by life. Before they see each other again the woman knows that, in truth, her brother is dead. When she does come, it is to part. It is then that More pays his price. "For God's sake," he begs, "put your pride away, and *see*. I'm fighting for the faith that is in me. What else can a man do? What else? Ah! Kit! Do see!" Her answer is the simplest. "I'm strangled here . . . I spent last night on the floor—thinking—and I know!"

Before the end, which comes to him as it came to Jaures, More swims for a moment in the black waters that are to engulf him. "Put up with the truth for once," he shouts to the invading mob. "You are the thing that pelts the weak; kicks women; howls down free speech." Other words leap flamingly, but a swift blow stops all.

An instant later Mr. Galsworthy, in a flash of most truthful ironic vision, shows the Aftermath in tableau. A peaceful sunny square, musical with birds: and there, silhouetted against the light, a monument erected to his memory. On the pedestal, engraved with beautiful unawareness, are the solemn words "Faithful to his Ideal."

There is, in "The Mob," a suggestion of moral preciosity. But, if one is tempted to believe that More made a gratuitous sacrifice of his life, one immediately thinks: "Sacrifice to what?" The answer comes sharply, sacrifice to a brute, a beast—the brute in all of us when we join the mob. "The Mob" says that, hard as steel.

It is easy, of course, to be sentimental about martyrs. Life is pragmatic, and to achieve one must compromise. But one cannot read "The Mob" without a stabbing realization of the little infidelities of life. The mob itself, after all, is nothing. The instrument that tortured Stephen More, it is merely a symbol of our arcane friend, the World. If the navvy growled at More in the alley behind the theatre, he only rendered guttural the suave accents of the editor of the Parthenon. It may seem unreal that every creature in the play, down to the wistfully ingenuous daughter, should strip More of comforts and leave him "alone as the last man on earth." In point of fact, however, this is singularly true to life. When it comes to the trials of private conscience, every man is just as terribly alone as the soldier on the firing line, the woman in the ache of childbirth, the invalid in the icy clasp of death. Fortunate is man if, by lucky chance, his own and other consciences coincide. But there is no promise that such will be the case. "The Mob" brings no comfort to the believer in human remissions, human concessions, human tolerances. Where it brings comfort is in its

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Portable William James

Habit, by William James. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 50 cents net.

AN intelligent publisher would no more think of snatching thirty or forty pages out of Spinoza's Ethics, and binding them separately than he would think of turning a few propositions from Euclid into a gift-book. Treated so, the great severe unifiers would make dreary reading. Nor as wholes do they often get their message across to the average man. Suppose he does follow them a little way. What happens? He feels as if he were being towed further and further from concrete lands, as if he were nearing no coast, not even a dangerous. In nine cases out of ten he cuts the hawser and makes for home.

But suppose he reads on to the end of some philosophic system, not without a real effort to master it? He is left dissatisfied, suspicious. He accuses philosophers of reducing all things to law by coolly overlooking large tracts of the irreducible. Would the particular philosophy he has been grappling with be very different, he asks, if its maker had spent his life shut up in a box?

William James, being in achievement and at heart no unifier, no system-maker, has written many chapters which can usefully be reprinted each by itself. Almost any chapter illustrates his insight into details. Almost any chapter persuades us that here is a philosopher who shares not only such philosophic doubts and worries as we happen to have, but also a great many of our other interests. And the more chapters we read the stronger grows this persuasion.

He did not spend his days remote in a box. All his life he lay exposed to the sights and sounds and smells of reality, sensitive to them, endlessly curious about them. His books read as if he had passed much of his time in the open, much of it in human companionship. Not only does he deliver his message like a man of this world. It was out of this world, with its strangeness and miscellaneousness, that he got the raw material of all but the supernatural bits of his message. His books are crammed with insight into the parts of this miscellaneousness.

Nobody is more alive to the value of a superlative memory, nobody more convinced that it is a necessary part of a certain kind of great man's equipage easier, who never bids us undervalue the goods we cannot hope for.

Nobody is more alive to the value of a superlative memory, nobody more convinced that it is a necessary part of a certain kind of great man's equipment. Yet he is not afraid to tell you that the natural retentiveness of your memory is something you cannot better, no matter how hard you try. He would tell you so, such is the perfection of his candor, even if the bad news made you despair.

But he does not happen to think the news very bad. Although a man's general retentiveness "is a physiological quality, given once for all with his organization, and which he can never hope to change," he can make his memory a more serviceable instrument by "elaborating the associates of each of the several things to be remembered."

Besides, William James has known efficient workers whose memories were never very good tools, just as he has known efficient workers who had little power of voluntary attention. They did not lose heart. You need not lose heart. There is something which can make you efficient in spite of your untrustworthy memory and your wandering morning and find yourself among the experts at your kind of job.

Be brave, he tells you, though you lack all the gifts, the desirable and admirable gifts, which flower into intellectual greatness. But what if you lack all others as well? What if you are absolutely instead of relatively a duffer? Still you need not despair. Still it pays to be brave. The whole moral world remains open, where victories are won by men and women who have no mental force worth mentioning. Into each of us each of us can put, if he chooses, an indomitable something. And most of us can choose.

Open William James almost anywhere and before long your feet will be on just such a moral trail as the one we have been following. Your guide never tries to deceive you. Here and there he stops you, bids you look at things you must renounce, never depreciates the worth or dims the glory of what you are renouncing, teaches you, on the contrary, to rate it higher than you did before, and in whatever predicament he leaves you does not leave you forlorn. Courage is in your heart, courage that grows and flourishes and puts forth fruit in due season.

Nor are you, to tell the truth, alone with courage. William James is with you. The words he chooses, and the cadence of his sentences, so like the cadence of good talk, quickly bring you into his presence and keep you there. You see and hear a real man, a real American, lucid, tolerant, eager, inventive, surprising, who dares to endure, to do and to believe. His mind is always touching the real world, and sheds light at every point of contact. The real world is penetrated at a thousand and one places by his mind, yet the perceiving and interpreting mind leaves reality undeformed and lifelike.

No more high-hearted, no more solidly nourished apology for courage has been written in our day. The virtue of William James's books is to make us brave. Their defect, in case the reader be a shade less happily suggestible than the average man, is to make us wonder. Even if the world were not what it is, but so irrationally bad that courage would be useless, would not William James have sought to make us as brave as he would still have been, in spite of everything, himself?

PHILIP LITTELL.

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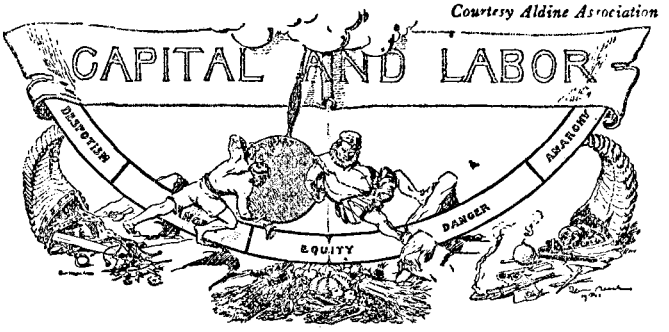

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